

**CARING FOR OUR CHILDREN: A COMPARATIVE CASE STUDY OF
CHILD-CARE POLICY AND CHILD-CARE ARRANGEMENTS
IN AUSTRALIA AND CANADA.**

by

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I hereby declare that this thesis is my original work.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'C' followed by a long horizontal stroke and a small upward flick at the end.

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ABSTRACT

This thesis continues the feminist project of challenging mainstream assumptions which obscure the experiences of women and the gendered nature of the welfare state and its interactions with the market and the family. The care of children provides the focal point. The research also examines the influence of child-care and related policies upon child-care arrangements and, by extension, investigates the impact of policy decisions upon the everyday lives of women, men and children. The research takes the form of a comparative historical case study analysing the development of child-care policies and service provision arrangements in Australia and Canada from the late 1980s to date. It draws upon data from relevant public documents and other studies, and generates statistical data from official surveys, such as those of the Australian Bureau of Statistics and Statistics Canada. While Australia has moved closer to having a national child-care system funded by the Commonwealth Government, child-care in Canada has increasingly become a minor social program of little or no importance in provincial budgets. The federal government in Canada has relinquished its responsibility for child-care for all but the indigenous (i.e., first nations and aboriginal) communities. Both countries nonetheless continue to rely on informal child-care provided by women and encourage parental care despite on-going rises in female labour force participation. Moreover, recent political and economic conditions in Australia, have made formal child-care more expensive and less accessible to many of those families who need it.

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CHAPTER I

CHILD-CARE AND THE STATE

Introduction

This thesis is a comparative study of the development of child-care policy in Australia and Canada. Analyses of the relationship between the state, the family, and the market have, for the most part, assumed that caring is an attribute and activity which naturally belongs to women and is beyond the realm of social investigation. As a result, the welfare work of women and unpaid caring work performed within the family and the community has been taken-for-granted and thus neglected by mainstream studies of the welfare state. This neglect has persisted, despite a twenty year history of feminist empirical and theoretical work which has continually challenged this assumption and begun to expose and confront some of the major contradictions inherent within the welfare state in modern western societies. The gendered nature of the interactions between the state, the market and the family is perhaps nowhere as obvious as in relation to the care of children. The unequal division of labour in the workforce and domestic sphere is inherently connected to the social construction of child-care responsibilities as predominantly a female preserve. The state is increasingly involved in shaping and reshaping this social construction directly and indirectly through policy debates, development and implementation.

Child-care has gained considerable attention by feminist scholars and others involved in research on women and the welfare state. In Australia, child-care has shifted from being a philanthropic issue to a women's issue and more recently has become widely regarded as central to the economic and social goals of the nation. Government provision and support for child-care is also a frequently used measure of equality in comparative welfare studies informed by feminism (Dominelli, 1991; Bryson, 1992; Bryson, Bittman, & Donath, 1994; Cass, 1993; Heitlinger, 1993; O'Connor, 1993a, 1993b; Gustafsson, 1994; Daly, 1994). While governments debate and contest the appropriate level of involvement in the development and maintenance of child-care systems, advocates promote the care of children as a social justice issue which concerns the well-being and development of children, and of the workforce and society as a whole.

This thesis continues the feminist project of challenging mainstream assumptions which obscure the experiences of women and the gendered nature of the welfare state

and its interactions with the market and the family. The care of children provides the focal point. The research also examines the influence of child-care and related policies upon child-care arrangements and, by extension, investigates the impact of policy decisions upon the everyday lives of women, men and children.

In order to understand the complexities of government policies pertaining to the care of children (including child-care, family, economic, education and work-related policies) and differing levels of government involvement in child-care, this project takes the form of a comparative case study. Changes during the past decade in government policies on the care of children, with regard to the development of a national child-care system and the characteristics of current child-care arrangements in Australia, are compared and contrasted with changes in child-care policies during the same period in Canada. Up until the mid 1980s policies related to the care of children in Canada closely resembled similar kinds of policies in Australia. However, by the end of the 1980s the federal government in Australia had implemented a national child-care strategy, while efforts to achieve the same in Canada were thwarted. The factors underlying the divergence between subsequent policy developments in these 'most similar' nations is central to the policy analysis undertaken in this case study. At a general level, child-care and related policies are examined as a means of gaining a greater understanding of the links between women, work, welfare and the state. More specifically, the research aims to expose those factors which influence the construction of care as it pertains to children and to identify points of similarity and difference between two countries classified as 'liberal' welfare states. By comparing 'similar nations' it is possible to evaluate our own policies and outcomes in light of unique responses to similar demographic, social and economic trends, and identify idiosyncratic outcomes and their possible causes.

Child-Care Terminology

Definitions of child-care differ across and within national boundaries. While multiple and overlapping definitions and discourses of care for children abound, one tends to dominate: care as service supported or provided by government. In the literature, child-care pertains to the institutionalised non-parental forms of care for children which emphasise the instrumental labour component of care, the provision of needs where the sense of obligation on the part of the carer is socially rather than affectively constructed, and on regulation and payment for services. The term 'child-care' is thus

used most often to focus attention on the care and maintenance of the machinery of care for children. As such it reflects assumptions of 'normative' practices, of appropriate levels of state, family, workplace and school involvement in providing care for children, and of suitable interactions between these institutions (Colbatch, 1996). The rhetoric of various governments validate and reinforce particular positions and draw attention to the care of children as either a social or a welfare service, depending on the context.

The two types of child-care which concern industrialised welfare states are referred to in Australia by government agencies as 'children's services' and 'child protection services', formerly known as 'child welfare services'. Children's services cover a broad range of care/education services for children under school age and care services for primary school-aged children. These services are mainly supportive in nature. That is, child-care services

provide care and developmental activities for children whose parents need care for work-related and/or personal reasons, and for children in family crises, including those at risk of abuse and neglect. (Parents needing care for work-related reasons include those who are working, looking for work or studying or training for work.) (AIHW, 1997: 97)

For instance, long day care services enable parents of below school-age children to participate in the labour force or in education and training, as well as contributing to children's social and emotional development. However, these services may also be used in a preventative way for providing 'respite' care for parents not in the labour force where families are under stress.

Child protection services typically refer to services which attempt to overcome or alleviate the problems of children in families who are perceived as unable to provide appropriate care for their children (AIHW, 1997). Child care services, however, also provide care for children at risk of neglect and/or abuse, though they are not primarily used for this purpose. Although this conventional division between 'child care' and 'child protection' is conceptually 'artificial', it is followed in this thesis for the specific purpose of deliniating the scope of the research. Therefore, the term 'child-care' is used throughout the thesis to refer to all forms of non-parental and parental child-care, excluding services provided essentially for children in need of protection.

The child-care discourse draws attention to government supported non-parental care arrangements. It thus obscures the fact that most care for children throughout the world, including the industrialised welfare states is provided by women, primarily by

mothers or by extended female family or friends. When included in discussions about the care of children, parental and informal care tend to be defined in relation to an institutionalised set of state acknowledged practices, to the services provided or supported by government (Colbatch, 1996). Parental care (mostly mother care) characteristic of an affective relationship (love) between the parent and her child, is assumed to be free from government interference and is portrayed as the ideal care arrangement. Care-giving work in both domestic and more formal domains, however, can and does consist both of labour and of love, despite the implicit and total denial of this link in contracts and government policies regulating paid care (Waerness, 1987). As a consequence, policy rhetoric and government regulations tend to re-emphasise and re-formulate the boundaries and differences between 'public' and 'private', 'formal' and 'informal', and 'parental' and 'non-parental' care, and obscure the temporal, spatial and affective nurturing aspects of care children receive in various child-care situations. It has also been argued that the level of payments (almost always very low) to carers (almost all women) is intrinsically based on an assumption of the continuing entrapment and subordination of women (Finch, 1990).

Child-Care and the State

The care of children is viewed here as both a private and a public matter which links the family, all levels of government and the labour market. It has recently been recognised as an equal opportunities issue and a labour force concern in many Western liberal democratic countries. The structure and operation of societal institutions; including the family, social networks, the local community, the various levels of government and the labour market, influence patterns of child-care arrangements in Australia and in Canada. These child-care arrangements include parental care, care by a relative or sibling, care by a neighbour or friend, care in a day care centre, care in a pre-school or kindergarten, family day care, outside school hours care, and occasional care. When a degree of coordination is observable among the various forms of child-care arrangements a 'child-care system' is taken to exist.

Child-care systems are developed within particular demographic, economic and social contexts. They reflect distinct political ideologies which, according to Lamb & Sternberg (1992), are based on four dimensions: equality between men and women; public (societal) or private (familial) responsibility; a social welfare or educational program orientation; and notions of childhood and child development. Each of these

dimensions influences government decisions regarding the level of involvement in the support and provision of child-care and the care of children more generally, and with respect to demand and supply, cost, quality and staffing issues more specifically.

The social welfare/education dimension pertains to the perspective governments take on the purpose of child-care. It is exemplified by the historical split, in Australia, Canada and elsewhere, between the provision of custodial care (e.g. for the poor) and early childhood education (e.g. preschool) services (e.g. for the middle and upper classes). Notions of childhood and child development influence the stage at which governments begin to consider the educational and developmental needs of all children. In some countries, such as France and Denmark, childhood education is considered the right of every child from a very early age. In other countries, governments become involved in the educational welfare of children only when they reach primary school age.

Advocates of child-care argue that child-care is vital to women's economic, social and political participation as full members of society and to the realisation of citizenship rights equivalent to that enjoyed by men. For instance, Martha Friendly, a Canadian child-care advocate and researcher has argued that

[w]omen cannot achieve equality without workforce equality and workforce equality cannot be achieved without access to child care. Child care services permit mothers of young children to participate fully in the paid labour force, school, or employment training. Without access to reliable child care, women of all income levels are impeded in their pursuit of equality in the workplace, at home, and in the broader society. (1994:23)

Indeed women's participation in the labour force has increased markedly in Australia, Canada and other industrial countries during the past two decades, as shown in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1: Female Labour Force Participation In Australia, Canada And Other Selected Industrial Countries, 1970 & 1990.

COUNTRY	EMPLOYED WOMEN AS % OF ALL WOMEN		WOMEN AS % OF LABOUR FORCE
	1970	1990	1990
Australia	37	46	38
Canada	37	49	40
France	39	45	40
Netherlands	26	31	31
Sweden	41	55	45
United Kingdom	41	46	39
United States	42	50	41

Sources: United Nations (1991:104).

Increases in women's labour force participation have resulted in part from social and demographic changes and in part from economic transformations. A decline in fertility rates, corresponding to fewer dependents, has afforded many women the opportunity to take up employment outside the home. Rising divorce rates and corresponding increases in the number of one parent families have also motivated women to seek greater economic independence. Further, rising costs of living have forced many couple families to earn two incomes in order to achieve and maintain home ownership and a decent standard of living. While women's desires and right to access education, employment and independent incomes have gained social acceptance, changes in the economy have opened up opportunities for women's entry into the labour market, especially in the retail and service industries where flexible and part-time work hours make it possible for women to work and fulfill their family responsibilities (Eichler, 1988; Bryson, 1992; Graycar & Jamrozik, 1993; Baker, 1995; Meyer, Moyle & Golley, 1996)¹. Acceptance of government policies aimed at supporting families in their efforts to provide for their children has also become widespread. Women's participation in the labour force has been assisted by government initiatives aimed at expanding job opportunities, providing education and training, creating family-friendly employment conditions, and supporting the provision of publicly funded or sponsored child-care. These policies may well be interpreted as an indication of government support for the enhancement of women's citizenship rights.

The provision of high quality publicly funded child-care is also recognised as a benefit for others besides women (see Figure 1.1. overleaf). Research on early childhood education has shown that quality child-care can have a positive impact on children's development. High quality child-care typically equates with regulated services provided by trained or Early Childhood Education qualified staff who are consistent and maintain a minimum level of standards and a low child to staff ratio. Advocates have argued that families, employers, communities, and the society at large also benefit from high quality child-care (Friendly, 1994; Wangmann, 1995). For instance, quality child-care helps women and other family members balance social and familial responsibilities. It may also provide a vehicle for the delivery of services such as parental guidance and community information, and endow the skilled workforce with a solid educational foundation.

1 Details of these demographic changes in Australia and Canada are documented in Chapter 3.

Figure 1.1: Beneficiaries Of High Quality Child-Care

CHILDREN Provides positive development opportunities for children with working parents and for those with one parent at home; Allows a good quality of life.
FAMILIES Helps balance work and family responsibilities; Allows all income levels to participate in employment, job training, and education; Allows escape from dependence on social assistance through employment, education and training; Provides a vehicle for delivering other services; Provides support and resources for parents of all employment types.
WOMEN Permits pursuit of economic and social equality by participating fully in labour force, school, or training; Helps women balance work and family responsibilities; Provides resources and support for women at home with young children.
BROADER SOCIETY Allows workers who are parents to make a contribution to the economy; Enhances the effectiveness of workers who are parents by diminishing work / family tensions; Provides a solid foundation for the education of the skilled workforce.

Source: Friendly, (1994:20).

A team of academic economists has reported that publicly-funded child-care can create major economic and social benefits for society (Ainstie, Gregory, Dowrick, & Pincus, 1988). These benefits can be achieved in a number of ways: by helping low-income families out of poverty through the facilitation of employment opportunities; by bringing more people into the labour market and thus increasing the tax base; by making more efficient use of the human capital developed by way of the education system; and by providing positive financial returns to the government through increased taxation revenues and reduced benefits to non-working parents (Ainstie, et al, 1988). Rather than situating child-care in a false dichotomy between the needs of parents and the needs of children, fuller appreciation of child-care policy can be gained by thinking broadly in terms of for whom child-care is intended.

The distinction between 'care' and 'education' services was institutionalised very early in the history of children's services in Australia (Brennan & O'Donnell, 1986; Brennan, 1983, 1994) and in Canada (Goelman, 1992; Friendly, 1994). 'Care' refers to custodial care, originally provided in the form of day nurseries to cater for children of female sole parents who were 'obliged' to support themselves and their children. 'Education' was and remains the emphasis of the kindergarten or pre-school movement which began in Germany and spread to Canada and Australia during the late nineteenth century, promoting the belief that the condition of working class family life could be improved through voluntary, philanthropic activity. Community child-care lobbies or child-care

advocacy groups have included trade unions, welfare organisations and feminist groups (Brennan, 1994), while childhood education and pre-school associations generally promote 'education'.

Another key child-care policy issue is auspice (that is, who operates the child-care program). The provision of child-care typically falls along public or private responsibility alignments. 'Public' here refers to state and non-profit provision of child-care services, 'private' implies commercial operations. In Australia, the main lobby group representing commercial child-care centres is the Australian Federation of Child Care Associations. In Canada, commercial providers include subsidiaries of large American corporations which trade on the New York Stock Exchange, owner-operated single operation ventures, and agency operated programs, some of which 'masquerade' as non-profit (Friendly, 1994). There is a major concern among the community child-care advocates that profit oriented commercial programs sacrifice quality for profit. Indeed, research in Canada and the USA comparing the two sectors has indicated that commercial child-care services are more likely to deliver poorer quality care than non-profit centres².

The division between formal and informal caregiving tends to align with the public/private split. In Britain, for instance, unpaid caregiving performed by family, friends, relatives and/or neighbours 'in the home' is distinguished as 'informal care'. Clare Ungerson (1985, 1987, 1990) has noted that one implication is that 'informal' care which takes place in the domestic domain is spontaneous, unplanned, unregulated and unobservable, based on obligations arising from sentiment and affiliation, rather than on the rationality and detection of 'need'. In contrast, 'formal' care which takes place in the public domain implies care by large numbers of substitutable social service personnel to even larger numbers of clients on the basis of affordable cost and competition between clients (Ungerson, 1985, 1987, 1990).

In Scandinavia many different kinds of servicing can be considered informal if it is unregulated. Formal care, is taken to refer to regulated care regardless of the domain, payment or dependency of the care recipient. A combination of the British and Scandinavian conceptualisations of care is used in Australia. Formal child-care is

² For example Pierce (1975), Whitebook et al (1989), Friesen (1992), Harvey & Krashinsky (1986), West (1988), Canadian Day Care Advocacy Association/Canadian Child Care Federation (1993) among others reviewed by Friendly (1994:240-3).

defined as care that is regulated and occurs away from the child's home, leaving informal care to be defined as non-regulated care either in the child's home or elsewhere. These definitions reinforce the public/private (domestic) split.

In 1992, the first report from the Canadian National Child Care Study (CNCCS) presented data on primary care arrangements in fifteen categories (excluding school and including a category where no arrangement was identified). The classifications included care by the interviewed parent at work, the spouse at home, the spouse at work, an older sibling, self-care, a relative in the child's home, a relative not in the child's home, a non-relative in the child's home, a non-relative not in the child's home (not licensed), a non-relative not in the child's home (licensed), in a nursery, at a kindergarten, at a day care centre, and in a before/after school care program. Many of these arrangements have parallels in the Australian context, although only Canada has a nursery school program and includes spouse care as a form of informal care arrangement, and only Australia has a specially designated long day care program and includes an 'other formal' category which accounts for adjunct care. Greater disparity is found in terms of funding arrangements and the share of the child-care responsibility between parents, the community, the market and the state.

During the 1980s child-care in Australia and the political climate surrounding its development began to diverge from its previously shared trajectory with Canada. In 1988, an 'open moment' was seized in Australia. A national child-care strategy was devised and implemented by a Labor government sensitive to the economic arguments promoted by the Australia Council of Trade Unions (ACTU) and influential femocrats. About the same time, the progressive conservative government in Canada, founded on a neo-conservative platform and ideology of individual and self-reliance and in the process of retrenching social welfare services, developed and tabled a proposal for a national strategy on child-care. This proposal and its accompanying legislation were scuttled by child-care advocates and concerned organisations which viewed the government's strategy as one of containment, 'being so regressive as to be irredeemable' (Friendly, 1994:117).

The Role of Government

The extent and purpose of government intervention in the provision of child-care services and financial support for the care of children varies across nations. Two extreme models of child-care are discussed in the literature. The 'maximum private

responsibility' paradigm is based on the dual assumption that responsibility for the care of children rests directly with families and that this responsibility is the principal obligation and privilege of motherhood (Ergas, 1990). This assumption is associated with the ideologies of familism and motherhood. The virtually non-existent British³ and American⁴ systems are characteristic of this model, which is also referred to as the 'hands off' approach (Brennan, 1994). The 'maximum public responsibility' paradigm supposes that public institutions assume responsibility for the participation of women in the labour force and provide extra-familial child-care. The Swedish system of child-care, which is universal and publicly funded, is the exemplar of this 'social democratic' model. Child-care in Australia and Canada, like that in most other welfare states, falls somewhere between these two extremes reflecting various blends of public (societal) and private (familial) responsibility.

The two extreme models of child-care systems are reflective of two of Esping-Andersen's three world's of welfare capitalism (Esping-Andersen, 1990). Maximum private responsibility is characteristic of the 'liberal' cluster of welfare state regimes. In contrast, industrialised nations exhibiting maximum public responsibility are classified as 'social democratic' or 'institutional' welfare states. A third cluster, the 'conservative corporatist' regime, groups welfare states shaped mostly by the Church.

Canada and Australia are categorised by Esping-Andersen within the 'liberal' welfare state regime, yet both have child-care systems characteristic of a combination of public (societal) and private (familial) responsibility. This discordance highlights the limitations of mainstream theory for understanding the different experiences of the welfare state for men and women, already documented by feminist sociologists in Australia (e.g., Bryson, 1992, 1994, 1995; Shaver, 1990, 1993a), Britain (e.g., Williams, 1991; Sainsbury, 1994, 1996), Canada (e.g., O'Connor, 1993a, 1993b) and America (e.g., Orloff, 1993, 1996). Nevertheless, Esping-Andersen's model, based on social rights, patterns of inequality produced and addressed by social policy, and the way in which the state and market are interrelated, does provide a useful framework for understanding the influence of political structures and historical legacies on policy formation, and for examining the interactions between the state, the market and the family (Orloff, 1993; O'Connor, 1993b).

³ See Melhuish & Moss (1991, 1992) for an account of child-care in the United Kingdom.

⁴ See Lamb, Sternberg & Ketterlinus (1992).

Research Questions and Methodology

There are three main sociological approaches to the study of child-care, as discussed by Auerbach (1991). Child-care can be viewed, first, as a set of tasks or a role, second, as a qualitative relationship between the child and his/her caregiver, or third, as an institutionalised arrangement defining the structure and context within which child-care occurs either inside or outside the family (1991:3). The third sociological approach is adopted here. As Auerbach suggests

[v]iewing child care as an arrangement that in its many forms has become institutionalised allows us to recognise the links between families and other social institutions, and to see that child care is a public as well as a private concern (1991:8).

While there is a fairly extensive literature on child-care programs and policies, and on child-care as an institutionalised arrangement affected by the workings of governments and public agencies, the bulk of it has come from social welfare and public policy analysts. The focus has been on government provision or lack of provision of child-care programs and financial assistance. Questions of ideology about the assignment of child-care responsibilities to women and about the impact of government policies on the private child-care arrangements made by families have largely been ignored. A sociological analysis of child-care, however, allows an investigation of the interplay of the basis for allocation of child-care responsibility, the conflict between work and family commitments, and the context and nature of institutional responses to child-care needs, especially as they are experienced differently by gender.

This study contrasts the development and implementation of a national child-care policy in Australia with attempts toward the same in Canada. It attempts to determine if federal government involvement in the state/provincial concern of care for children makes a discernible difference to the accessibility of services and to eligibility for assistance to families with dependent children, and thus to the lives of parents and their children under 12 years of age. Policies related to the care of children in Australia and Canada are examined by asking 'what counts', 'what for', 'on what terms', 'for whom', 'by what means' and 'to what effect' (Jones, 1985). More specifically, the research aims to provide answers to the following questions:

What constitutes child-care policy?

What are the stated and implied objectives of the child-care policies?

What are the underlying assumptions of the child-care policies?

For whom are the child-care policies designed to benefit?

By what means are the goals of the child-care policies to be achieved?

To what extent have the child-care policies met their objectives?

What effect or influence have the child-care policies had on societal and individual patterns of child-care arrangements?

An institutional feminist framework, consisting of both policy process and policy outcome dimensions, is devised and used to guide the comparative case study analysis of child-care policy and arrangements in Australia and Canada. The investigation of the formation of various child-care policies takes into account the interaction of the institutions involved in the provision of child-care, the ideological position of the governing party, the prevailing economic and social conditions, and the influence of interest groups on political decisions. Legislation and initiatives relating to capital development, operation and regulation of child-care spaces and provision of maternity and parental leaves and benefits, as well as family allowances and child endowments, are reviewed. In view of the fact that child-care gained prominence on the political agenda in both of these advanced industrial welfare states throughout the 1980s as an equal opportunities or 'redistributive' issue, policy outcomes are analysed in terms of availability and access to non-parental child-care arrangements for children under 12 years of age, before and after policy changes during the late 1980s, and in terms of eligibility for financial assistance. Time use data is analysed in an attempt to measure the impact of policy outcomes on individual parental child-care patterns.

Why Compare Australia and Canada?

As Alexander & Galligan (1992) have noted, comparative studies are undertaken for a number of reasons. Comparisons can make a significant contribution to scholarship and public debate in the specific countries concerned, as well as to comparative analysis more generally. Assumptions of similarity allow differences in policy, institutions or political debate to be highlighted. Moreover, the explanation of unexpected and interesting differences within broadly similar countries leads to a more refined account of national attributes and peculiarities, and assumed generic characteristics may turn out to be unique. Comparison also facilitates a deeper examination of political principles and development by shifting our focus away from traditional frameworks and orthodoxies (Alexander & Galligan, 1992). It allows us to evaluate the progress and direction of political change. Because such research aims

to explore the dynamics of change in government involvement in the support and provision of care for children, a 'most similar system' method of comparative study is deemed appropriate. Further, comparing Australian policies and outcomes with those of another nation categorised in the same liberal welfare state regime may highlight possibilities for reform (Castles, 1993).

Canada has rarely been compared with Australia. Typically comparisons are made with the United States of America and the United Kingdom, the larger, older and, in many respects more extreme liberal welfare states. Further, child-care arrangements in these two nations have in the past diverged, and continue to diverge, more greatly from the Australian case. Comparing the Canadian position with that in Australia allows the research to focus on the divergence in recent child-care developments and outcomes.

Australia and Canada are both federal parliamentary democracies with different histories and political struggles. Comparing child-care in Australia and Canada will provide insights into the extent to which the structure and operation of political institutions reflect national idiosyncrasies of culture and tradition, as distinct from commonalities of design and heritage (Alexander & Galligan, 1992). Federalism features prominently in structuring the institutions of government and public policy in both Australia and Canada, but it is not clear if it has been a factor in terms of child-care policy outcomes? National policy orientations appear both stronger and more widely accepted in Australia than in Canada, and the strength of Australian political culture and ideals creates a resistance to pluralist principles that seem more easily accepted in Canada (Alexander & Galligan, 1992). According to Andrew Jones, 'the politics of day care and the politics of federalism are closely intertwined in both countries' (1984:5). The Canadian child-care experience, influenced by a political system built around accommodation and recognition of diverse communities and interests, may well then have something to offer Australia in its future handling of the dilemmas of pluralism and national integration.

Thesis Overview

The thesis begins by reviewing feminist critiques of Esping-Andersen's typology in Chapter II. Both theoretical and methodological issues pertaining to the incorporation of gender into welfare state theory, so as to make visible the beneficiaries of state intervention, are raised. Several opinions and possible alternatives presented in the

literature are examined as a means of identifying essential dimensions necessary for a suitable theoretical framework for undertaking a comparative analysis of child-care policy in Australia and Canada. Two types of dimensions are identified: Policy process dimensions relate to the development and implementation of policy and point to what constitutes child-care policy. Policy outcome dimensions draw attention to the intended and unintended consequences of policies that concern child-care in Australia and Canada.

Chapter III presents the context for a 'most similar nations' strategy of policy analysis. The historic, demographic, social, economic, cultural and political similarities between Australia and Canada are described. This description allows for the few differences to shed light on the relations between women and the state in each of these similar liberal welfare states (Shaver, 1993a). Both nations share similar demographic, economic and social characteristics that have led to greater labour force participation of women, without a corresponding increase in men's housework and child-care participation. This shift has subsequently led to an increase in demand for non-parental forms of child-care. The responses by various levels of government to these changes, which reveal the stated and implied objectives and underlying assumptions of child-care policies, as revealed in Chapters IV and V, differ within and between countries.

The purpose of child-care and the shaping and reshaping of policies throughout the 1980s are discussed in Chapter IV. A brief history of the evolution of the day care and kindergarten movements illustrates the common beginnings of child-care in Australia and Canada and highlights the extent of past and current government involvement in child-care provision. The focus is on efforts made toward the establishment and implementation of a national child-care strategy or program. Key players and pertinent arguments both in support of and in opposition to a national child-care strategy are identified, and the reasons for the adoption of a national program in one country but not in the other are described. Subsequent changes to patterns of child-care in Australia and in Canada provide the focal point for the following chapters. A snap shot of changing patterns of child-care arrangements in these two liberal welfare states is also presented, including a brief analysis of time spent by parents and others caring for children in 1992. The snap shot is taken as a benchmark for policy outcomes on a societal and individual level from which more recent policies, programs, access to available child-care spaces, and eligibility to financial assistance can be compared.

Changes in child-care policy in Australia and Canada during the 1990s to the present provide the focus for Chapter V. At the beginning of the decade, child-care in these similar welfare states seemed to be heading in different directions. However, while the federal Labor government in Australia was injecting life and money into the Australian child-care system and announced plans for the formation of a child-care accreditation council and a national planning framework, the Canadian federal government was preoccupied with the issue of Quebec's 'distinct society' status and moved to relinquish to the provinces what little spending power it had over child-care and other social programs. Moreover, budget cutbacks at all levels of government have had a devastating impact on existing child-care programs across the country. The case of Ontario is presented as an example of the vulnerability of child-care programs to changes in provincial government policy.

Access to, and eligibility for, child-care services and government assistance are considered measures of policy outcomes. Changes in federal government financial assistance for the care of children are examined in light of stated political objectives, discussed in Chapter V, and changing child-care needs, discussed in Chapter VI. While the number of women with children under the age of 12 years participating in the labour force continues to grow in both countries, informal non-parental care remains the most common child-care arrangement after parental care (mostly care by the mother). This pattern highlights the role of parents (primarily that of mothers) and of informal carers (mostly women) in the child-care nexus. The analysis also reveals that demand continues to outstrip supply, and inequalities of access and affordability remain prevalent in both countries, despite political rhetoric espousing the provision of equitable and efficient child-care and efforts by consecutive governments toward that end.

Chapter VII examines the ways in which governments aim to achieve their stated child-care objectives of helping different families meet the costs of rearing and caring for their children, and, specifically, paying for child-care. This analysis takes into account entitlements to grants and subsidies paid directly to child-care centres on behalf of parents with young children as well as direct payments and indirect tax benefits which help make formal child-care available and affordable to families that need it. The analysis thus elucidates the funding mechanisms for child-care in Australia and Canada and points to a shift in the type of financial support provided and the extent to which such support can help the supply of child-care spaces approximate the demand

for them.

Characteristics of an ideal comprehensive national child-care system are identified in Chapter VIII. These characteristics are used to summarize the similarities and differences between child-care in Australia and in Canada, and to highlight the inadequacies and strengths of child-care policy in each country. The discussion includes a brief examination of quality assurance, service co-ordination and the provision of complementary policies such as maternity, parental and paternity leave and benefits, taxation, employment, education, and family-friendly workplace policies.

Arrangements for the care of children in Australia and Canada, as elsewhere, continue to change. Perhaps the most significant changes in recent years are taking shape at the moment. The Canadian federal government changed its funding arrangement with the provinces in 1996, and the previous showpiece of Canadian child-care, the Ontario system, has been slowly dismantled by a Conservative government since it took power in 1995. In Australia, a conservative Liberal coalition government which in 1996 replaced the Labor Party (the presider over developments in child-care during the past thirteen years), has abolished operational and capital grants to child-care providers and introduced a new family tax initiative to replace all existing family and child-care payments. These events raise many policy related questions and implications for future policy directions, especially in light of earlier developments. The conclusion discusses the implications of the findings, possible directions for the development of welfare state theory, and the need for further research and new policy initiatives.

CHAPTER II

THEORIES OF THE WELFARE STATE: AN INSTITUTIONAL FEMINIST FRAMEWORK

Introduction

To analyse child-care policies adequately, it is necessary to have a theoretical framework that can account for the interplay of the state with the market place and the family, as well as the interaction between the different institutions involved in the care of children. In Australia and Canada, many families supplement parental child-care with a number of other child-care arrangements that include informal care by relatives, friends, and neighbours, and formal care by commercial, government and non-government agencies. Various theories of the welfare state have been devised over the years. Few, however, are able to incorporate all three social spheres. Many theories adopt a gender-neutral perspective. Indeed, '[m]ost scholarship about the welfare state simply does not use gender as a category of analysis, welfare is more commonly understood to reflect and form the class system' (Gordon, 1990:10). Theories built around the relationship between the state and the individual attach concepts of 'rights', 'liberties', and 'obligations' to a sexless, classless, colourless person, an individual abstracted from all social relationships other than the one with the state (Franzway, Court & Connell, 1989). This is perhaps most apparent in the dominant theories of comparative welfare state research. The state is taken here to mean a socially constructed and historically situated institution, which encompasses government, legislature and bureaucracy. Embodying widely-held sociological assumptions, the state is assumed to be a relatively autonomous institution which exists in a dialectical relationship with both the economy and the society, structuring, defining and mediating the relationship between capital and wage labour through industrial and arbitration legislation and other means (Pusey, 1993). More specifically in relation to Australia and Canada, the federal structure of the state is viewed as influencing both the character of state power and the opposing positions and strategies of the major political parties.

Although the welfare state is a 'poor analytical concept' (Oyen, 1986:2), it remains crucial to the debate on the development of nations, which provide for citizens who are unable to meet their basic needs. The concept is commonly employed to identify complex societies characteristic of extensive public sector responsibility for, and

sponsorship of, the provision of 'welfare' for all of its citizens. In its broadest sense, 'welfare' simply means 'well-being', or what is 'good' for people (Spicker, 1988: Bryson, 1988). It is, however, used more systematically in a narrower vein to refer to the services provided by a set of institutions explicitly aimed at meeting basic economic, physical and social needs. Basic needs are defined within a cultural context and, as the concept of basic needs expands, the set of institutions constructed to meet them grow more comprehensive and diversified. The role of the welfare state coalesces with the role of the state (Oyen, 1986). In the classic or traditional sense, welfare, or more precisely social welfare, includes health care, public housing, education, social security, and a range of personal services targeted to people in dependent situations, i.e., children, those with disabilities, and the elderly. Narrowly defined, a welfare state assumes responsibility for the provision of the classic forms of social welfare.

A welfare state is, however, more than a set of social services. As Mishra has noted, the concept refers to 'the idea of state responsibility for welfare as well as welfare "institutions and practices" ' (1984:xi). Further, as Elizabeth Wilson has asserted 'it is also a set of ideas about society, about the family, and - not the least important - about women' (1977:9). That is, the welfare state consists of policies, practices and an ideology in which the institutional functions of providing, supervising, regulating, mandating, stimulating, and supporting alternative sources of welfare are embedded. Moreover, welfare states and the term itself are historically defined: the conception is strongly linked to the development of the British welfare state which was gender neutral in theory but highly gendered in practice.

In recent years, comparative research on welfare states has been greatly influenced by the work of Esping-Andersen (1990). The theoretical basis and utility of his typology of welfare state-regimes, developed in his *Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism*, has been widely used and widely criticised. The model is based on social rights, on patterns of inequality produced and addressed by social policy, and on the way in which the state and market are interrelated.

[It] departs from categorisations which are concerned predominantly with comparisons of levels of social expenditure and the redistributive impact of tax/transfer policies on the primary distribution of income , ... departs from this economic framework and incorporates a more sociological understanding of the political and ideological, as well as economic, dimensions of welfare state redistribution. (Cass, 1993a:94)

However, Esping-Andersen's model has a number of limitations. First, he does not

adequately deal with welfare within families. Although he refers to the nexus between market, state and family in advanced industrial states, he does not deal with the family except to mention that obligations of families to support their own members are embedded in income support arrangements in Germany and Austria. Second, his model is not gender sensitive. Mainstream welfare theories that are not gender sensitive do not take account of women's experiences, and are inattentive to the gendered nature of welfare states. Women, however, not only constitute the majority of welfare recipients but they are the main providers of formal and informal welfare services as well. So women's lives are more often dependent and determined by state policies than men's (Hernes, 1984), especially with regard to policies concerning the care of children. Theories based on male experiences prioritise state - market relations to the extent that welfare (care) provided within the family is excluded from consideration. Consequently, a good deal of welfare state research has been partial and ignores welfare work within the family. This deficiency has encouraged the neglect of gender in discussions on democracy, social inequality and citizenship (Hernes 1984; Pateman 1987, 1988), concepts, which have important theoretical and analytical implications for the study of welfare states .

Despite its limitations, Esping-Andersen's model does provide a useful starting point for the development of a conceptual framework for evaluating the content of child-care and related programs, for understanding the influence of political structures and historical legacies on child-care policy formation, and for examining the interactions between the state, the market and the family (Orloff, 1993; O'Connor, 1993b). The purpose of this chapter is to examine attempts to incorporate gender into welfare state theory in an attempt to identify a theoretical framework appropriate for the examination of child-care policy and its outcomes in two very similar welfare states. It begins with a general overview of feminist arguments for gender sensitive welfare theory and a review of recent conceptual and theoretical work undertaken toward this end. The second section turns more specifically to an evaluation of Esping-Andersen's model of welfare state-regimes, to a reappraisal of Australia and Canada's placement with the United States of America and the United Kingdom within a liberal cluster, and to a review of feminist critiques and subsequent revisions of the model. Characteristics pertinent to the exploration of the dynamics of change within child-care policy and care arrangements for children in Australia and Canada and to the explanation of the divergence between these countries over time are thus identified. They are then combined within an institutional framework to provide a gender sensitive conceptual

approach to structure and guide the analyses presented in the ensuing chapters.

Feminism, the State and the Care of Children

Over the past two decades, a large body of research has shown that state policies and gender relations exist in a dialectical relationship: state policies are shaped by gender relations and gender relations are affected by state policies. Within this literature two broad understandings of the relationship between the state and gender can be found (Orloff, 1996). First, there is the view that the state contributes to the social reproduction of gender hierarchies. The second approach sees states as varying in terms of their ameliorative impact on social inequality (Orloff, 1996).

The social reproduction perspective reflects neo-Marxist and socialist feminist emphases on the ways in which state social policies regulate gender relations and contribute to the social reproduction of gender inequality¹. Key mechanisms for the maintenance of gender hierarchy that operate together include the gender divisions of labour, the family wage system, and traditional marriage and a concomitant double standard of sexual morality (Lewis, 1993a; Cass, 1983, 1994a, 1994b; Pascall, 1986). These socialist feminist analyses have focused on women's responsibility for care work and the dependence of industrial capitalist societies on women's unpaid care work (Waerness, 1984; Borchorst & Siim, 1987; Ungerson, 1985, 1987, 1990; Balbo, 1987; Hernes, 1987; Finch & Groves, 1983; Cass, 1988), on the construction of gendered citizenship (Gordon & Fraser, 1994; Cass, 1994c, 1995; Pateman, 1988; Lister, 1995), and on the state's production of gender differentiation through access and eligibility to benefits (Nelson, B., 1990; Bryson, 1992, 1994, 1995). While highlighting the processes and mechanisms reproducing a hierarchy of gender relations which maintain women's economic vulnerability, these analyses have tended to ignore cross-national and historical variation: they have '... simply ignored the possibility that some state social provision - and, by extension, other forms of state intervention - has the potential to advance women's interests and/or gender equality' (Orloff, 1996:6).

The second understanding of gender relations and the welfare state assumes variation in the way in which states ameliorate social inequalities. These analysts point to the

¹ Orloff refers to the work of McIntosh (1978) and Wilson (1977) and the following edited collections; Sassoon (1987), Baldock & Cass (1983), Holter (1984), Diamond (1983), Ungerson (1985), and Gordon (1990) which discuss the variety of mechanisms through which the state contributes to the social reproduction of gender inequality.

feminisation of poverty, illustrated by the situation of many single mothers, and argue that this trend is partly due to the deteriorating position of women in the labour market but also results from the relative improvement in the situation of other demographic groups. Income transfer programs are seen as important buffers against the sources of women's poverty (Piven, 1985). Some have considered cross-national variation in policy outcomes. Mitchell's study based on data from the Luxembourg Income Study (1991a, 1991b, 1993), for instance, found the highest levels of poverty among single-mothers were in the United States, closely followed by Canada and Australia. It has been suggested, however, that some studies have been misleading, focusing only on poverty rates, while others have been criticised for overlooking the ways in which regulation may accompany benefits or for ignoring the effect of systematic characteristics of social provision on gender interests (Orloff, 1996). Further, Orloff points to the analytic focus shared with the social reproduction analysts, which makes it difficult to identify women's activity in policy making.

Two other theoretically informed strands of research, new historical and comparative studies, have highlighted the activities of women activists. They both emphasise the variation in the effects of social policies on gender and describe their interactions with class and gender. Historical analyses challenge both mainstream and feminist assumptions, revealing a significant amount of state activity directed at women and children and stressing the activities of women involved in reforming and shaping policies about women and children (typically ignored in the mainstream literature)². Although few studies include both Canada and Australia, they are significant for highlighting concerns that are central to any gender sensitive investigation of social policies effecting women and children. Collections edited by Koven and Michel (1993) and Bock and Thane (1991), for example, draw attention to important variations in women's political involvement in terms of policy making, administration and outcomes with regard to mothers and their children in the US, Britain, France, Norway, Sweden, Australia, Italy, Germany and Spain. A more directly comparative study was undertaken by Alena Heitlinger (1993), who examined Australia, Canada and the United Kingdom for an analysis of pronatalist policies and the impact of each country's women's political machinery on policy developments. Skocpol (1992) goes a step

² Two collections of work, edited by Koven & Michel (1993) and Bock & Thane (1991) are referred to by Orloff as illustrative of the maternalist politics that have been promoted at different times by reformers and policy makers in a variety of welfare states. See Marilyn Lake (1992) for an example of research on women's activities in Australia.

further, analysing men's and women's political activities and the differing fates of maternalist and paternalist policies in the US. She analyses the impact of political structures and processes on the formation and mobilisation of gendered identities and their influence on policy. These analyses not only identify the influence of the institutionally-shaped constitution of political identities and interests. They also emphasise the significance of hierarchies of class, race, ethnicity, gender and nationalism for social policy making (Gordon, 1990).

Many studies focusing exclusively or primarily on the United States and/or Britain have been criticised, particularly by comparativists familiar with the Scandinavian situation, for being too narrowly based. They rest on cases which assume women's domesticity and the notion of the family wage in social policy and are therefore unlikely to promote women's interests (e.g., Ruggie, 1984; Hernes, 1987; Siim, 1988, 1990; Leira, 1990, 1991, 1992; Borchorst, 1990, 1994; Cass, 1994b, 1995; Hobson, 1994; Hobson & Lindholm, 1995). However, when Ruggie (1984) compared Sweden with Britain, the character of governing coalitions was found to affect the progress of working women into the labour market. Further, Siim (1990) has shown that women's dual roles as worker and mother are supported by social and family policy in Denmark, while in Britain social policy based on 'familism, which assumes a male breadwinner and a female able to attend to caregiving duties, assigns care work to the family. Analyses have also revealed the persistence of 'traditional' gender relations on the organisation of social reproduction as well as on women's labour force participation in Scandinavian countries.

More recently, qualitative variations across nations have been analysed with respect to the concept of 'social policy regimes'. Shaver (1990) has defined the latter as systematic relations between the state and social structures resulting from institutionalised patterns of terms and conditions in welfare provisions and reciprocal economic, social, and political obligations to the state. Mainstream analysts have been concerned primarily with the effects of social policy regimes upon class relations, while feminist analysts have been more interested in the gender effects of social policy (Orloff, 1996). Perhaps the most significant mainstream study during the past decade has been the work of Esping-Andersen (1990) reported in *Three World's of Welfare Capitalism*. His discussion of welfare-state regimes has provided the material for much theoretical debate and empirical work, and has served as a building block for more recent feminist analyses.

Welfare-State Regimes

Esping-Andersen challenged earlier developments in welfare state theory by reformulating important concepts and postulating that politics not only matters but is decisive. He argued that existing theoretical models of welfare state characteristics were inadequate and that comparative empirical research is essential to an adequate description of the fundamental properties that unite or divide modern welfare states. A broad view³, that frames its central questions in terms of political economy and focuses on the role of the state in managing and organising the economy, provides the basis for an approach which assumes that welfare-state variations are caused primarily by the history of political class coalitions.

Esping-Andersen's understanding of the welfare state goes beyond the common textbook definition - 'state responsibility for securing some basic modicum of welfare for its citizens' (1990:18-19) - by questioning what is meant by 'basic' and what role social policies play with respect to the emancipation of citizens, the legitimisation of the system, and the market process. The approaches of earlier generations of comparative studies are discussed in terms of their theoretical and methodological adequacies for answering these questions. The first generation comparativists were concerned mainly with testing the validity of contending theoretical models of political economy. Some scored nations with respect to level of urbanisation, economic growth and dependency, while others compared the strength of working class power mobilisation⁴. According to Esping-Andersen, no convincing case arises for any particular theory. Moreover, the 'more or less' approach used to compare welfare states is criticised for contradicting the sociological notion that power, democracy, and welfare are essentially relational structures.

Three alternative methods for judging whether, and when, a state is a welfare state are discussed. The first is Therborn's conception of state structure and the historical transformation of state activities. For instance, when most daily activities are devoted to servicing the needs of households, a state can be considered a genuine welfare state. The second is derived from Richard Titmuss's distinction between residual

³ The narrower view focuses on 'the traditional terrain of social amelioration: income transfers and social services' (Esping-Andersen, 1990:1).

⁴ The work of Wilensky (1975), Cutright (1965), Hewitt (1977), Stephen (1979), Korpi (1983), Myles (1984), Esping-Andersen (1985), Schmidt (1982, 1983) and Cameron (1978) are referred to by Esping-Andersen in relation to these studies of power mobilization.

(minimal state responsibility) and institutional (maximum state responsibility) welfare states, which emphasises questions of content:

targeted versus universalistic programs, the conditions of eligibility, the quality of benefits and services, and, perhaps most importantly, the extent to which employment and working life are encompassed in the state's extension of citizen rights. (Esping-Andersen, 1990:20)

The third approach compares actual welfare states to some abstract model. It is discounted as ahistorical and unable to represent the ideals fought for by real actors during specific events in the ongoing class struggle.

In an attempt to integrate state activities with the role of the market and the family in social provision, Esping-Andersen devised a typology based on three main principles or dimensions: the quality of social rights, the resulting patterns of stratification, and the way in which the state and market are interrelated. The primary criterion of social rights is taken to be de-commodification or 'the degree to which individuals, or families, can uphold a socially acceptable standard of living independently of market participation' (Esping-Andersen, 1990:37). De-commodification is emancipatory and occurs when citizenship rights guarantee services that permit a person to live decently without reliance on the labour market and the wage nexus. It concerns the conditions under which class divisions and inequalities produced by the market are mitigated by parliamentary democracy, influenced by various social movement alliances and coalitions. In contemporary welfare states there are varying degrees of de-commodified rights, including those arising from the gendered division of paid and unpaid work, which also needs to be taken into account (Cass, 1993).

Social stratification is considered part and parcel of welfare states, with inequalities being produced and addressed by social policy. Indeed, the welfare state is viewed as a system of stratification in its own right, actively ordering social relations. The issue of paid employment provides the focus for an analysis of the interaction between the state and labour market. The interplay between the public and private sectors in providing welfare is critical, especially as 'markets are often politically created and form an integral part of the overall welfare-state regime' (Esping-Andersen, 1990:5).

The typology discussed in *Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism* is one about welfare-state regimes. A regime denotes 'the fact that in the relation between state and economy a complex of legal and organizational features is systematically interwoven' (Esping-Andersen, 1990:2). A regime acknowledges how traditional social-welfare

policies are constructed and how they influence employment and the wider social structure. The typology identifies three diverse regime-types, each with its own discrete logic of social interaction, organisation, and stratification. Moreover, each regime-type is shaped by different historical forces and follows a qualitatively different developmental trajectory. Variations between welfare states are not seen as linear but as divergences between clusters of regime-types.

The 'social democratic' cluster most nearly approximates the social democratic ideal. Principles of universalism and widespread de-commodification of social rights underpin social policies of this regime type. Social reform has been driven by social democracy, promoting general equality of conditions and producing policies of emancipation addressing both the market and the traditional family. The model is a fusion of liberalism and socialism that attempts to maximise the independence of individuals, grants direct transfers to children, takes direct responsibility for caring for children and other dependents, and allows women the choice to participate in the labour market or be a stay-at-home wife and/or mother⁵. The social democratic regime is genuinely committed to full-employment, guaranteeing the right to work as well as the right to income protection. Indeed, full employment is integral to the workings of welfare states such as Sweden and Norway, which exemplify the social democratic regime.

Nations such as France, Germany, Italy and Austria are grouped into a conservative corporatist regime, which emphasises conservative stratification attributes, corporatist organisation, and strong church influences in the polity and social life. As a result, conservative corporatist welfare states are strongly committed to the preservation of status differentials and to the preservation of the traditional family. Operating according to the principle of 'subsidiarity', welfare is made available by the state only when the family is unable to provide for its members.

A third regime clusters Australia with Canada, the United States of America and Britain. This 'liberal' welfare-state regime is characteristic of 'residual' welfare state activity, consisting of minimal state intervention and the provision of modest universal or means-tested assistance. Social programs are targeted to eligible low-income earners and state dependents according to strict entitlement rules. Traditional liberal

5 Esping-Andersen poses the choice as between 'work' and 'household'; the work performed by women in the household, by implication, is unrecognised. This may be a question of semantics, but also one of gender in conceptual as well as analytic terms.

work-ethic norms have circumscribed the progress of social reform to the extent that benefits are often stigmatised. They are also typically modest. As a consequence, de-commodification-effects are minimal, social rights are constrained, and stratification order based on a class-political duality between relatively equal state welfare and differentiated market welfare is erected.

The nature of class mobilisation, class-political structures, and the historical legacy of regime institutionalisation are shown to be three important factors influencing the salient interaction - effects between the causal forces of welfare state difference. The class character of welfare states helps explain their past evolution and their future prospects. Moreover, combined in an interactive power resource approach Esping-Andersen's framework is shown to be useful for evaluating the content of social programs (Orloff, 1993; O'Connor, 1993b) as well as for explaining the paradox of weak anti-welfare state sentiments occurring at times when welfare spending has been heaviest.

The Utility of Esping-Andersen's Model

Two types of studies have examined the utility of this model. The first applies the framework to analyses of specific policy areas, while the second employs different techniques to classify welfare states. The former includes the work of Gustaffson (1994) and Shaver & Bradshaw (1993), while Castles and Mitchell's (1990) cross-national study exemplifies the latter approach.

Gustaffson (1994) applied the typology to an analysis of child-care provision, subsidisation, and possible effects on labour supply in the US, the Netherlands and Sweden. The ideological legacy shaping the actions of policy makers provides the focus of the analysis, which found some support for Esping-Andersen's categorisation of these three welfare states as different regimes. The main concerns addressed by Gustaffson included the provision and financing of child-care, subsidy availability and eligibility, and the historical background of family policies affecting patterns of employment of mothers with young children.

Gustaffson noted that in the US, the exemplar of the liberal welfare state regime, 'the family and market orientation seems to have been a continuing factor shaping policy on very young children' (1994:56). Public support for child-care in the US is targeted. Disadvantaged children and children of employed mothers receive child-care for

educational purposes. Tax benefits, received as deductions for child-care expenses incurred by the lower-middle income groups, offer a second, indirect form of government assistance for child-care. The market and family based child-care system in the United States, differing by type, cost, and quality according to family income, is an illustration of the residual model of welfare, fitting neatly with Esping-Andersen's characterisation of the liberal welfare state regime.

The development of the child-care system in the Netherlands is shown to have been retarded, at least until recently, as a consequence of the state's subsidiary role in relation to the family and to the confessional pillars. The strong influence of the church and of traditional family values meant that family policies discriminated against women, actively encouraging them to remain at home. Child-care debates pitted the needs of women against the needs of children. It is therefore not surprising that only about one quarter of all mothers in the Netherlands work more than a few hours each week for pay. This situation may have changed slightly since the passing of the 1990 Child Care Stimulation Act, which promoted an increase in female labour force participation in an attempt to increase the number of taxpayers and raise more revenue to finance the welfare of a growing number of beneficiaries. The Dutch government now shares the cost of child-care with municipalities and with parents, and encourages employer provision of child-care by providing company subsidies and tax deductions on operating costs. Gustaffson concluded that 'the late arrival of childcare to accommodate the working mother in the Netherlands is an illustration of the functioning of the corporatist, Christian democratic pillarized welfare state' (1994:50).

In contrast to the situation in the USA and in the Netherlands, the child-care system in Sweden is shown to have developed in accordance with pronatalist policies promoted by a social democratic government. Consequently, child-care is universal, subsidised, high quality, and organised to accommodate the needs of the working mother. Access to subsidies is not means tested, although parental fees tend to be progressive with family incomes, and parental leave benefits allow parents to care for their children for up to 12 months after they are born. Moreover, child-care is not a problem for married or single mothers, many of whom work 20-34 hours per week rather than full time or not at all. This illustrates the fusion between work and welfare in Sweden, and again supports Esping-Andersen's welfare state regime typology.

Gustaffson's study highlights the utility of Esping-Andersen's framework for comparing

the development of three disparate child-care systems and lends support to the logic of examining the ideological legacy of a nation when comparing welfare states. His study did not, nor did it intend to, provide an indication of the salience of the typology with regard to welfare states within a regime.

Shaver and Bradshaw's (1993) paper on the recognition of wifely labour explores the form, quality and extent of support that fifteen modern welfare states offer for the maintenance of a spouse to perform household labour and child-care (where there are dependent children). Their theoretical framework merges feminism with a comparative welfare state approach. The former emphasises the benefits of unpaid domestic labour performed by women for their male wage earner partners and for capital, and the latter emphasises multi-focal comparisons of institutional structures of qualitatively different kinds⁶. Feminism also shows that the rather narrow approach employed in most

comparative welfare state studies neglects an important role of the welfare state by omitting assistance to families and children from the analysis. Indeed, Shaver (1990, 1992) has argued elsewhere that gender forms an important and systematic component of social policy regimes.

Inspired by the work of Jane Lewis (1993, 1994), three models for understanding the support of wifely labour were devised, using gender as an organising principle to examine the extent to which modern welfare states had moved away from an initial commitment to a traditional family breadwinner model. In this 'traditional' male breadwinner family model, the first of Shaver and Bradshaw's models, 'support is provided for a wife who is economically dependent on her husband ... throughout the period of adult life' (1993:7). In the second, 'modern' male breadwinner family model, state support is provided for a wife or sole parent to remain outside the labour market during the period when she has young children. In the 'dual' breadwinner family model, further state support is provided to dual earner families so that mothers of young children can, if they wish, be employed full- or part-time. These three models are assessed along two dimensions of variation; a variety of social policy regimes, and

⁶ Reference is made to the merging of these two approaches elsewhere, especially in discussions connecting welfare state types with the relationship between families, women, children and the welfare state, e.g., Shaver (1990), Sainsbury (1993), Waerness (1984), Hernes (1987), Siim (1988) and Taylor-Gooby (1991).

policy adaptations responding to the increasing labour force participation of married women and the political mobilisation around their needs. It is assumed that the state, market and family are mutually interdependent domains of social life, and that the management of relations between them is often the concern of social policy. Consequently, the concept of de-commodification as it is understood by Esping-Andersen is rendered problematic. This issue provides a focal point for the discussion in the next section of this chapter on feminist revisions and alternatives.

The evidence provided by Shaver and Bradshaw separately supported each of their three breadwinner models but did not demonstrate the emergence of any single overall pattern. It was, however, shown that welfare states do provide support to employed and unemployed wives, both with and without young children, and that the value of wifely labour varies extensively between and within welfare states. Child-care appeared to have a greater impact on the level of support provided than on other benefits, because child-care is expensive. Moreover, no obvious association was found between the measure of support for wifely labour and the regime types identified by Esping-Andersen according to his scores for de-commodification or for his measures of stratification.

In conclusion, Shaver and Bradshaw dispute the expectation of such an association, given the use of different measures. They claim that an expectation of association is warranted only when considering (a) the principle of subsidiarity which informs policy objectives in the conservative corporatist regime, (b) the social democratic facilitation of married women's employment, and (c) the politics which underlie the policy objectives themselves. With respect to future research they suggest that the concept of de-commodification should be generalised according to the levels and instruments of welfare state support, if only because it makes sense to apply it to replacement and supplementary income benefits paid in support of dependent family members. They also recommend that benefits and services supporting workforce participation, and hence the reduction of familial dependence, should be included in future analyses.

The work of Castles and Mitchell (1990) attempts to illustrate the linkages between welfare effort (the degree of financial commitment to the obviating of poverty and income inequality), welfare instruments (e.g., contributory insurance, types of eligibility, and access to benefits), and welfare outcomes (extent of income replacement and benefit equality, and degree of poverty and income inequality alleviated). Their

quantitative analysis of micro-data assembled by the Luxembourg Income Study (LIS), comparing the redistributive process in eighteen OECD nations, examined these linkages empirically and accounted for the complexities of welfare effort more adequately than was possible using earlier social expenditure based comparisons and an aggregate measure of public social expenditure as a percentage of the gross national product (GNP) (e.g., Wilensky, 1975)⁷. The model they devised and tested contrasted with earlier typologies, by stressing a four-world model instead of two ('residual' and 'redistributive') or three. They depict Australia as the epitome of a distinctive Radical group of nations along with New Zealand and the UK, set apart from the three other Liberal, Conservative and Social Democratic worlds of welfare capitalism.

Castles and Mitchell identify two main weaknesses in Esping-Andersen's model: First, the composite indexes on which the classification of welfare states was based, i.e., de-commodification and Socialist stratification, were seen to be heavily influenced by idiosyncratic decisions about means-tested benefits in Australia and New Zealand. Secondly, they are particularly critical of Esping-Andersen's treatment of unemployment benefits in Australia and New Zealand:

It is arguable that unemployment benefits in Australia and New Zealand do not meet Esping-Andersen's critical criterion of de-commodification, ... not because of the operation of means-tests, but because of the levels of benefits. That is not a consideration independent of the extent of welfare expenditure and is, in any case, already adequately captured in the construction of the de-commodification index without further adjustment. (Castles & Mitchell, 1990:13)

The main weakness in Esping-Andersen's account was thus seen to be his misclassification of Australia resulting from his unwillingness to concede the welfare-conferring potential of means-tested benefits in redistributive terms because of his primary concern with the rights-conferring aspects of welfare provision.

Castles and Mitchell consequently devised a simple model, which promotes alternative policy routes to similar redistributive goals. Further, it transforms comparative social policy analysis by endeavouring first to establish the nature of the linkages between

⁷ The inadequacies of the aggregate expenditure method of analysis of welfare effort was shown to be threefold: (1) the character of the existing outcomes determines the impact of social policy intervention, that is, different observed levels of poverty and inequality can result from identical inputs of expenditure depending on the distribution of incomes prior to income maintenance expenditures and taxes; (2) it ignores the way in which the welfare dollar is spent; (3) it ignores the linkages between taxation and the various components of welfare provision (Castles & Mitchell, 1990:7-9).

welfare effort, instruments and outcomes in particular policy areas and countries; second to locate the broad configurations to the linkages that characterise contemporary welfare states; and third to seek explanations for why it is that particular configurations occur in particular nations (1990:9). The model reproduces, for the most part, the worlds of welfare capitalism identified by Esping-Andersen. The difference is the existence of a fourth Radical welfare state-type regime 'in which the welfare goals of poverty amelioration and income equality are pursued through redistributive instruments rather than by high expenditure levels' (1990:16). Finland, Ireland, New Zealand and the United Kingdom join Australia in this category.

The model was tested to see how coherent the fourth typology would be in terms of its historical and structural origins and its consequences for outcomes. When a structural test was undertaken by ranking redistribution via taxation, a linkage frequently neglected in comparative social policy research, the typology changed slightly, with Canada exchanging its position with Ireland to join Australia in the Radical group. An historical test with respect to political configurations, taking into account trade union density and non-right party incumbency, left Australia with only New Zealand and the UK in the Radical type while Canada returned to the Liberal classification. Redistributive outcomes were measured in terms of the impact of transfers and taxes on the distribution of incomes with respect to redistributive objectives. Pre-transfer, post-transfer, and post-tax Gini coefficients were calculated to determine a net distribution which, when ranked, demonstrated an almost perfect clustering around the four welfare types: Social Democratic first, Conservative second, Radical third and Liberal fourth. The exception was Canada, which was Radical with regard to income tax but Liberal in redistributive terms.

Three points raised by Castles and Mitchell are particularly pertinent to this thesis. First, they highlighted the importance of welfare linkages in comparative social policy analysis. Second, they demonstrated that Australia has been misclassified by Esping-Andersen as a Liberal welfare state. That is, Australia was shown to be considerably different from the USA, the epitome of the residual welfare state regime. Canada, while appearing for the most part like the United States, was seen to share some similarities with Australia. Castles and Mitchell thus demonstrated that differences occur within regime types as well as between them. However, while providing an insightful analysis, they pay no attention to the salience of the gender divisions in work and welfare nor of the social policies which either reinforce, challenge or redress those

divisions and their attendant inequalities (Cass, 1993:99).

A 'most similar nations' comparative strategy can be very useful for assessing differences and similarities across dimensions relevant to gender (Orloff, 1996). For example, Arnlaug Leira (1992) found that there is significant variation among the Social Democratic welfare states in the level of public child-care provision and concomitant differences in woman's labour force participation. Leira argues that this variation results from differing models of motherhood. Different models of motherhood were also found to be institutionalised in Liberal welfare state policies. Orloff (1996) noted that while the US demands work for welfare from single mothers, the UK, Australia and Canada offer sole-mothers a period of state-sponsored full-time caring for their children. Greater state involvement and the influence of state-oriented feminism in Australia was noted by O'Connor (1993a) as contributing to a level of support for women's and mother's paid work above that of any other Liberal welfare state. Further, Shaver's (1992) investigation of policies controlling reproduction in the US, UK, Australia and Canada also revealed significant differences: in Britain and Australia abortion is accessed through medical procedure as a social right, whereas in Canada and the United States women have legal entitlement to 'body rights' but no social right to financial support for purchasing the service.

Other studies have questioned and provided alternatives to Esping-Andersen's typology, and have attempted to establish a gender-sensitive analysis of welfare state. These studies have been undertaken with respect to women's interests (Borchorst, 1994), the 'work-welfare' tradeoff for women (Siaroff, 1994), paid and unpaid work (Bittman, Bryson & Donath, 1993; Bryson, Bittman & Donath, 1994; Cass, 1993, 1994a, 1994c, 1995), the notion of 'time politics' and 'gendered time' instead of the distribution of income (Scheiwe, 1994), and differences in social policy outcomes for men and women (Lewis, 1993, 1994; O'Connor, 1993b, Orloff, 1993; Borchorst, 1994; Bittman et al. 1993; Bryson et al 1994; Cass, 1993, 1994c; Bussemaker & van Kersbergen, 1994; Daly, 1994; Sainsbury, 1994; Hobson, 1994; Makkai, 1994). Collectively, feminist analyses have criticised Esping-Andersen for his gender-blind scheme:

his citizens are implicitly male workers; his dimensions tap into states' impact of class relations and the relationship between states and markets without considering gender differences within classes or the relations between states and families; he leaves invisible women's work on behalf of societal welfare (i.e., unpaid caring/domestic labour); and his framework fails to consider states' effects on gender relations, inequalities and power. (Orloff, 1996:20)

This chapter now examines more closely some of the feminist critiques of mainstream comparative welfare research. Primacy is given to the revisions and alternatives, devised on the basis of Esping-Andersen's typology, which take into account the gendered nature of welfare states and the ways in which welfare is experienced differently by men and women.

Feminist Critiques, Revisions and Alternatives

Feminists afford significance to collective interests and conflict rather than to consensus. Their attention is given mainly to sex-based rather than class-based interests (Bryson, 1992). Four different forms of feminism have been identified as providing explanations for women's oppression and the relationship between the welfare state, the family, women and the sexual division of labour. Liberal feminism, radical feminism, socialist (or Marxist) feminism, and Black/Third World feminism⁸ have in common the view that state welfare provision is important for the amelioration of women's lives as it simultaneously reinforces female dependency and the sexual division of labour. Feminism has focused intensely and critically upon reproduction, sexuality and physical bodies, especially with regard to the relationship between citizenship rights and the welfare state. Feminism has also pointed to 'the subjugation of women in the private sphere of the family, which according to liberal theory ought to be (and in practice usually has been) free from state interference'⁹ (Orloff, 1993:309). It is not surprising then that the questions feminist analysts have asked pertain to the role of women in social reproduction, what this role means for women, the nature of state intervention with regard to social reproduction and the impact this has on women's lives. Feminist analysis asks 'why women?' rather than

simply accepting that women provide unpaid caring and nurturing, or that they form an army of cheap labour in paid employment, because it is natural, or because it suits the accumulation and labour force needs of capitalism. (Williams, 1989:42)

Moreover, feminists have noted that

[t]he most serious failure of contemporary democratic theory and its language of freedom, equality and consent and of the individual, is that women are so easily and inconspicuously excluded from references to the 'individual'. (Pateman, 1989/1994:378-9)

The work of Esping-Andersen is not free from this kind of criticism. As Cass has

⁸ See Williams (1989) for a comprehensive review of feminist theories, their underlying philosophies and perspectives on the welfare state.

⁹ Reference is made to the work of Pateman (1987, 1988).

pointed out, his analysis has a number of silences:

- * the ungended account of commodification and decommodification.
- * the ungended account of the political, religious and social movements involved in welfare policy struggles and alliances; what roles did organised women play, inside labour movements, in church politics and in separate women's groups in the determination of social policy outcomes?
- * the ungended account of the divisions of work and the divisions of welfare. (1993:101)

These concerns have been reiterated and extended elsewhere, as Diane Sainsbury (1994, 1996) noted with reference to a collection of edited papers in her publication *Gendering Welfare States*. Several unifying themes run through the predominantly gender-sensitive, but conceptually varied critiques and revisions of Esping-Andersen's welfare-state regime model. These themes include a commonality of concern for the integration of both paid and unpaid work, the problem of the concept of de-commodification with reference to women's work, the continuing lack of a systematic comparative research on gender and welfare states, the empirical inconsistencies between gender regimes and Esping-Andersen's welfare-state regime and other mainstream typologies, and the recognition that not only do gender ideologies and the division of labour shape social provision but social policies also affect the life situations of women and men differently across welfare states. All of these observations need attention if an adequate understanding of the gendered welfare state is to be attained.

A number of feminist theorists have already demonstrated how some of these issues may be addressed in the comparative study of welfare states. Orloff (1993) and O'Connor (1993b), for instance, have both revised the welfare-state regime model, utilising mainstream theories and conceptions to make it gender sensitive. They argue that the power balance among labour, state and capital and the organisation of state-market relations are significant for gender, because they affect the organisation of social reproduction and the nature of women's labour force participation. In addition, the inclusion of a stratification dimension, which takes into account gender differentiation and gender inequality, is critical. However, as O'Connor has noted

the incorporation of gender into the analysis of welfare state regimes entails a reassessment of the conventional conception of citizenship, a broadening of conventional definitions of political mobilization and participation and a modification of the welfare state regime concept used in the mobilization of power resources research approach. (1993b:501)

O'Connor explores the main points of the power resources tradition in light of the key insights provided by feminist research. That is, the possibilities inherent in the political

system for the modification of market inequalities, realised through the mobilisation of power resources by the working class and through the formation of political coalitions around the objective of shifting the principle of stratification and the basis of social rights from class to citizenship, are combined with the notion that citizenship rights may differ for men and women because of structured gender inequalities. A conceptualisation of citizenship, it is argued, must therefore reconcile the achievement of equality with differences in condition. Further, the incorporation of gender into the analysis implies a comprehensive account of political processes, including the exercise of power through bureaucratic organisations and the influence of social movements and advocacy or interest groups.

In O'Connor's view the concept of de-commodification needs elaboration. Central to welfare state regimes, de-commodification emphasises the relation between the labour market and the state. O'Connor argues that, if attention is to be turned toward the family, (the third element in a tripartite relationship), de-commodification must be supplemented with the concept of personal autonomy. Personal autonomy is given as insulation from personal and public dependence, and relates directly to the articulation of relations of reproduction and production. The caring and domestic labour performed mainly by women, and the benefits that traditional domestic arrangements have for men, are thereby taken into consideration. This arena is where contradictions between the simultaneous increase in opportunity and dependence in the development of welfare states is likely to be most evident.

O'Connor's revision of the mobilisation of power resources approach is based on a recognition that capitalist societies and welfare state regimes are structured by both class and gender, and sometimes also by race, 'in historically specific interacting ways and that the restructuring of the welfare state is largely a restructuring around gender' (1993b:515). This observation implies an approach in which the status of individuals as providers and consumers of welfare services, as employees and political citizens, must be considered in addition to their client status.

Orloff's (1993) revision similarly alters the state-market relations and stratification dimensions of social provision to take into account gender hierarchies, power relations within families, and the social organisation of caring and domestic labour. She renames the first dimension 'state-market-family relations' in order to emphasise the contribution of families to welfare and the political importance of the family-state

division of welfare labour. The second dimension, 'stratification', is considered elastic enough to incorporate gender while the 'social citizenship rights/de-commodification' dimension is seen as more problematic: citizenship is already gendered and the concept of de-commodification is misleading and not fully applicable to women workers. Two additional dimensions are necessary in order to properly assess the state's effects on gender relations. The first, 'access to paid work', captures the extent to which women are assured employment. The second, 'women's capacity to form and maintain autonomous households', reveals the extent of women's freedom from compulsion to marry and stay married in order to obtain economic support. Orloff's revised schema therefore implies that a gender sensitive analysis of welfare state regimes must evaluate

[1] the extent to which the state has taken over the provision of welfare services (an aspect of state-family-market relations), [2] the relative treatment of paid and unpaid workers (an aspect of stratification), [3] the bases of people's claims to services (an aspect of social citizenship rights), [4] women's access to paid work, and [5] women's capacity to form and maintain autonomous households. (1993:323)

In an attempt to rectify the omissions in Esping-Andersen's model, Cass carried out an analysis of social policies that materially affect the provision of caring work and the conditions under which it is provided. Caring is defined as work performed outside of market arrangements, and outside of the market income structure. It is

... concerned with tending to the physical and emotional needs of dependent others ... carried out within the household, creating an intermeshed conjuncture of private, domestic life and obligatory tasks demanding considerable physical and emotional effort, within a relational context based on a sense of duty and love. (Cass, 1993:93)

From a comparison of policies for sole parents in Australia, Britain, Austria and Norway, Cass develops a preliminary categorisation of welfare state regimes. Her typology consists of a 'needs-based', a 'market-centred' and a 'liberal' welfare state regime. The former is characterised by the recognition and legitimisation of caring work through the provision of an explicitly designated payment to sole parents and/or through the provision of explicitly designated education, employment and training programs and public sector child-care. The 'needs-based' welfare state regime is conceived to be the most highly de-commodifying in the sense of supporting re-entry into paid employment by sole parents and their caring work undertaken outside of the labour market. Australia and Norway are seen to fit into this type of welfare state regime.

In Cass's typology, Australia is in the low de-commodification 'market-centred' welfare

state regime. In this regime, which also includes the United States, caring work is given little if any legitimation and recognition in central institutional social security and social assistance arrangements. Instead, the compulsion of the market principle is strong and few public sector services like child-care are provided to support the economic activity of sole parents and others. In contrast, the 'liberal' welfare state regime, exemplified by Britain, is ambivalent towards the de-commodification of caring work, displaying a tension between recognising sole parents' family responsibilities and emphasising their participation in the labour market. Social policies are thus seen to be both explicitly and implicitly directed towards market-centred objectives, unsupported by public child-care provision and the necessary tax/benefit arrangements.

Cass's analysis highlights the significance of taking into consideration women's care-giving work or family responsibility and its policy treatment in the comparative study of welfare states. In so doing she produces a categorisation of welfare state regimes which is very different from that proposed by Esping-Andersen's market based typology. Cass's approach draws attention to the need for a wider analysis which does not privilege market work and assess labour de-commodification through income support only in terms of compensation for market exclusion. Instead, recognition should be given to the totality of human needs by asking how various welfare state regimes enable choice to be exercised by women and men with caring responsibilities, so that parents may choose to remain outside of the labour market while caring for their children or seek re-employment without being constrained by low pay and the lack of public sector support.

Cass's analysis is significant for a number of reasons. Centred on the patriarchal dimension of the welfare state, it stresses the importance of distinguishing between de-commodification (the ability to resist the market) and non-commodification (the ability to work outside the market). It also emphasises the construction and reconstruction of non-market relations of family and community in addition to that of social relations within the capitalist economy (Shaver, 1993). Cass does not, however, explore the social stratification that de-commodification of labour produces, nor does she link her analysis of regime types with differing histories of state formation and the patterns of mobilisation around family and women which underlie them. As Shaver (1993) has suggested, the large scale historical changes taking place in patriarchy itself, in response to changing economic structures and to ideological developments

associated with the rise of the modern women's movement, is an important dimension of analysis which needs to be considered in comparative discussion of women, work and family policy.

Jane Lewis has suggested that, instead of attempting to revise welfare state regime models to incorporate gender, we should start, not with the policies themselves, 'but with some other organising framework, such as the relationship of paid and unpaid work' (1994:7). McLaughlin and Glendinning's (1994) idea of 'defamilialisation', which they use to devise a taxonomy of contemporary welfare approaches to 'paying for' care, is an example of another organising framework. Another example is the previously mentioned typology of Lewis (1993). Their framework uses gender as an organising principle and is used to examine the extent to which modern welfare states have moved away from a traditional family breadwinner model. Lewis further suggests that family policy may provide another fruitful starting point from which to attempt to compare welfare systems 'because it is relatively unfettered conceptually from the parameters of current social policy' (1994:7).

Taking a different approach, Diane Sainsbury (1994,1996) has suggested separating gender out. By way of a review of feminist critiques of mainstream models and typologies, she identified five dimensions of variation that have been either marginalised or neglected. They include:

the type of familial ideology; its influence on social policy in terms of the unit of benefits and contributions and the nature of entitlement; its influence in other policy areas reinforcing the actual division of labour within the family; the boundary between the public and private sphere; and the degree to which women's work is paid or unpaid. (Sainsbury, 1994:242)

The dimensions of variation are supposed to be more explicitly formulated than those presented in Jane Lewis and Ilona Ostner's (1991) typology, which, according to Sainsbury, 'indicate what a country's policies are not rather than what they are' (1994:255).

In an attempt to discern the implications for gendering welfare state analysis and refine the original models and typologies, Sainsbury compares two contrasting ideal welfare state types; the breadwinner model and the individual model, depicted in Figure 2.1 (below). Utilising the five identified dimensions, she notes that in the breadwinner model familial ideology promotes a strict domestic division of labour along traditional lines: breadwinner husband, carer wife. The individual model instead prescribes

individual responsibility among husbands and wives for their own maintenance and shared financial support and care of their children. The sexual division of labour shapes social, economic and political practices in the breadwinner model, takes the family as the unit of analysis, and bases eligibility of entitlements to benefits on breadwinner status and the principle of maintenance. But the individual model takes the individual as the unit of benefit, contributions and taxation, and assumes that the boundary between the private and the public spheres is fluid rather than fixed and strictly enforced. More importantly, for child-care, caring and reproduction is perceived to be a private matter confined to the home in the former model. However, in the latter, care, even in the home, is not restricted to unpaid work and can provide entitlement to social security benefits.

Figure 2.1: Dimensions of Variation of Social Policy

DIMENSION	MALE BREADWINNER MODEL	INDIVIDUAL MODEL
Familial ideology	Celebration of marriage Strict division of labour Husband = earner Wife = carer	No preferred family form Shared roles Father = earner/carers Mother = earner/carers
Entitlement	Differentiated among spouses	Uniform
Basis of entitlement	Breadwinner	Citizenship or residence
Recipient of benefits	Head of household	Individual
Unit of benefit	Household or family	Individual
Unit of contributions	Household	Individual
Taxation	Joint taxation Deductions for dependents	Separate taxation Equal tax relief
Employment and wage policies	Priority of men	Aimed at both sexes
Sphere of care	Primarily private	Strong state involvement
Caring work	Unpaid	Paid component

Source: Sainsbury, 1996: 42.

The advantage of this approach, Sainsbury asserts, is that the models can be used to analyse the policies of any country over time. Moreover, the dimensions on which they are compared can be examined in relation to the dimensions designated by mainstream analysis. A disadvantage, however, is that the focus on welfare efforts and outcomes downplays the importance of welfare processes and neglects the influence of the mobilisation of women in the political arena in the development of policy.

The work of Barbara Hobson (1994), and more recently that of Hobson & Lindholm (1995), have highlighted the importance of including welfare processes in analyses of welfare states that are gender sensitive. They devised a model to analyse the power resources of women's collectivities, and to explain the relationship between actors,

interests, their power resources and outcomes. The model reveals the interdependencies in cognitive framing within social movements, their power resources, and extensions in social citizenship rights. Hobson and Lindholm contend that the process of identity formation is crucial for understanding how women's collectivities articulate claims and exercise power in welfare states. Collective identities are considered significant in terms of the promotion and development of differential social policy and provide the basis for an analysis of 'how women as social actors were able to use discursive resources and encode their programs into hegemonic cultural forms and ideologies, in effect to manipulate and extend the meanings of existing vocabularies' (1995:31). In so doing Hobson & Lindholm indicate how and when gender politics influence the construction of citizenship rights. Moreover, their process oriented approach gives theoretical space for building a gender dimension into comparative welfare state research.

The models discussed in this section collectively draw attention to an array of dimensions that require investigation in a study of child-care policy in two similar welfare states. Esping-Andersen's model, as indicated by Gustaffson (1994), Shaver and Bradshaw (1993) and Castles and Mitchell (1990) points to the inclusion of child-care provision, subsidisation and possible effects on labour supply. Shaver and Bradshaw, adopting a feminist approach, also emphasise the importance of considering unpaid domestic labour and institutional structures when comparing welfare states, while Castles and Mitchell suggest it is necessary to establish the nature of the linkages between welfare effort, instruments and outcomes.

Other studies questioning Esping-Andersen's typology illuminate dimensions, which make the analysis of welfare states gender-sensitive. These studies stress the importance of including both paid and unpaid work, a stratification dimension which takes into account gender differentiation and gender inequality, a broadening of or supplementation to the concept of de-commodification, a non-commodification dimension that can reveal the construction and reconstruction of non-market relations of family and community, the type of familial ideology and its influence on child-care and related policies, and welfare processes which illuminate how and when gender politics influence the construction of citizenship rights and child-care.

Figure 2.2: Institutional Differentiation of Child-Care and Corresponding Carer Careers

INSTITUTIONS PROVIDING CHILDCARE		CARER CAREERS	
Family and household Social networks		<i>Paid</i> Au pairs, nannies, servants	<i>Unpaid</i> Mothers
			Relatives, friends, neighbours
Informal labour market		Relatives, friends, baby-sitters	
Formal labour markets: private and public, non-profit and for-profit		Professionals	Volunteers

Source : Leira (1994:193)

More specific to the analysis of child-care policy is Arnlaug Leira’s institutional differentiation of child-care settings and carer careers, as depicted in Figure 2.2. Leira's typology considers the types of contract or norms of reciprocity that are used to regulate the exchange between the carer and the child-care consumer. The institutions providing child-care, including the family and household, social networks, the informal labour market, and the formal labour market constituting both public (state) and private (non-state) run services operating on either a commercial or non-profit basis, and the interactions between them are examined in order to paint an informed picture of both the care-providing structure and diversification of carer careers in modern welfare states.

Carer careers are seen to have the potential of encompassing unpaid and paid caring work and combining caring with other forms of employment. Care arrangements are used to identify the main forms of carer careers: paid contractual (e.g., 'cash for care'), paid non-contractual (e.g., informal work), unpaid contractual (e.g., marriage contract), and unpaid non-contractual (e.g., non-contractual exchange; reciprocity, altruism). The model thus allows the provision of care to transcend the public-private distinction and the production of everyday care, which shows an ongoing renegotiation of boundaries between the state, both central and local; the voluntary sector; the family; and the formal and informal labour markets. Leira’s institutional construct is specific to the analysis of child-care. It focuses on outcomes and reveals how the investigation of child-care arrangements can illuminate the intended and unintended outcomes of policy at both a societal and individual level. Further, it provides space for the recognition of ideological constructs, such as the ideologies of familism (familial ideology) and motherhood, which feminists have utilised in their research on the

welfare state and shown to have shaped women's lives (Sainsbury, 1994, 1996)¹⁰. These ideologies, which in effect define the family and the normative role of husbands and wives within the public and private spheres, have influenced social policy and are reproduced in the sexual division of labour in the home and in the labour market.

Ideologies of Familism and Motherhood

The social construction of child-care appears to be primarily informed by family (Baxter, 1993) and gender (Barrett, 1980) ideologies. These ideologies, also referred to as familism (Dalley, 1983, 1988) and the feminine ideology (Tronto, 1989, 1993) respectively, rest on the assumption that care, in general, and child-care, in particular, is the 'natural' preserve of women. So pervasive and effective are they in functioning to maintain and reinforce females as primary caregivers in society that they are embedded within ideologies of the welfare state and within the sexual division of labour.

According to Dalley (1988), the ideology of familism (what Sainsbury refers to as the familial ideology) is an established dominant ideal that operates as a principle of social organisation at both the domestic and public level, especially in the field of social care, e.g., the care of children. Familism assumes that the family is the most appropriate unit and location for care and the family has a moral duty to care for its members. Another premise of familism, also a premise of the feminine ideology, is that caregiving is a form of relating to others that comes naturally to women (Baines, Evans, Neysmith, 1991). This assumption operates to sustain the prevalence of female caregivers. Thus, the 'family unit' in reality is care given mostly by mothers, daughters, wives or daughters-in-law and the majority of caring professionals are women.

A component of familism, which has received greater attention than familism itself, is the ideology of motherhood. Although becoming a mother has a biological foundation, motherhood is socially constructed (Calvert, 1985; Reiger, 1985, 1995; McCartney & Phillips, 1988; Everingham, 1994; Ribbens, 1994; Hays, 1996). That is, expectations of what it is to be a 'good mother' are socially learned and reinforced by media images and by sanctions imposed on women who break the norms (Reiger, 1985).

¹⁰ Ideologies are not static. As structures of ideals, beliefs, values and practices that are socially and culturally constructed they are open to change. The most powerful and long lived of ideologies are, however, those that continually tap into the socio-political nerve of society.

Motherhood and womanhood are often intermeshed (Wearing, 1984). As Baxter (1993) has demonstrated the motherhood ideology has its roots in the middle-class ideology of the early twentieth century which not only changed the meaning of work, but also created a shift in beliefs associated with the family and gender. Femininity was presented as incompatible with economic productivity being best suited to domesticity, caring for the home and servicing the needs of other family members: "womanhood" was defined in terms of the domestic sphere. The family was separated from work and at the ideological level 'the family stressed a rigid specialisation of tasks based on gender divisions' (Baxter, 1993:28). The meaning of motherhood was transformed.

Together, the ideologies of familism and gender constitute an ideology of care. This ideology sustains the gender difference assumption which implies that compassion and the ethic of care are essential components of femininity and of the female identity while competition and the ethic of justice provide the basis for masculinity and the male identity. The female orientation is translated as a predilection for caring 'for' others as well as for caring 'about' them. It is assumed then, that women are 'naturally' better carers than men and are predestined to be society's instrumental care providers. This apparent inherent propensity renders any knowledge and skill carers develop during their caregiving experiences as null and void.

Ideologies are not static. As structures of ideals, beliefs, values and practices that are socially and culturally constructed they are open to change. The most powerful and long lived of ideologies are, however, those that continually tap into the socio-political nerve of society. The sustainability of the ideologies of familism and motherhood may well then depend on the strength and longevity of the ideology of gender and continue to impact on the care of children and others, on women's work, and on the experiences and choices open to women during the course of their lives. Therefore, in accordance with Hernes (1987), Leira (1992), and Sainsbury (1994) it is assumed here that the gendering of welfare states requires specific attention to the public-private connection with a conceptualisation of welfare provision in related terms. This dictates the investigation of paid and unpaid work both inside and outside of the home, the analysis of the affects of the provision of employment and services on the situation of women as workers, consumers, mothers and clients (as mentioned by Orloff) and stresses the necessity of examining the role of familial and gender ideologies in structuring welfare policies associated with the care of children.

An Institutional Feminist Approach to the Study of Child-Care

In an attempt to combine, and build on, the insights provided by mainstream and feminist analysts, an institutional approach is adopted in this study. This approach utilises the dimensions of variation identified by Sainsbury (1994, 1996) and Leira's (1991, 1992) institutional differentiation. It is assumed that the gendering of welfare states requires specific attention to the public-private connection with a conceptualisation of welfare provision in related terms and allows the transcendence of the public - private dichotomy. This dictates the investigation of paid and unpaid work both inside and outside of the home, the analysis of the affects of the provision of employment and services on the situation of women as workers, consumers, mothers and clients and stresses the necessity of examining the influence of collective identities and the role of familial and gender ideologies in the structuring of social policies associated with the care of children. It requires asking 'what counts', 'what for', 'under what terms', 'for whom', 'by what means', and 'to what effect' child-care and related policies impact upon individual child-care arrangements and affect national child-care patterns. In this regard, the child-care industry is viewed as a segment of the child-care system, albeit a very influential and important part.

Dimensions identified as pertinent to a comparative analysis of child-care policy in two similar liberal welfare states are of two types: process related and outcome related. The process related dimensions consist of the institutions identified by Leira as involved in the care of children, the relationships between these institutions or the institutional interactions, policy benefits and their characteristics, political ideology and assumptions, the influence of collective identities, and the influence of other policies. The outcome related dimensions can be classified as either general or specific. The general social policy outcome dimensions, as identified by Esping-Andersen and his feminist critics, include the quality of social rights, social stratification, and personal autonomy. The patterns, sphere, and nature of child-care arrangements are dimensions specific to the analysis of child-care policy.

The characteristics of these dimensions are listed in Figure 2.3 below. The first dimension allows for the identification of the main types of institutions and the role each of them play in the care of children. The second dimension emphasises the contribution of families and unpaid carers to child-care and the political importance of the family-state division of child-care labour. It also points to the variety of interactions

that create different outcomes between and within welfare states.

Figure 2.3: Dimensions for a Gender Sensitive Analysis of Child-Care Policy

DIMENSIONS	CHARACTERISTICS
<i>Policy Process</i>	
Type & Role of Institution	family social networks (neighbourhood / community) informal labour market formal labour markets: private and public, non-profit and for-profit state - different levels of government
Institutional Interrelations	state - state state - market (formal & informal) state - family informal market - formal market market (formal & informal) - family
Policy Benefit Characteristics	direct or indirect type of entitlement; basis of entitlements unit of benefit; recipient of benefit unit of contribution
Political Ideology & Assumptions	type - familial, gender, community influence - division of labour, sphere of responsibility
Influence of Collective Identities	women's political / social groups child-care advocates / activists career women with children stay at home mothers early childhood educators child-care providers
Influence of Other Social Policies	economic - budget priorities, deficit / debt reduction taxation - contributions, deductions, credits, joint / individual, dependents education - pre-school & primary school, funding, outside school hours care employment - priority of sexes
<i>Policy Outcomes</i>	
Quality of Social Rights	political participation economic participation social participation decommodification / commodification
Social Stratification	class, gender, ethnicity paid / unpaid work participation - women's access to paid work
Personal Autonomy	carer &/or earner capacity to form and maintain autonomous households
Patterns of Care Arrangements	type of care arrangements (parental, informal / formal non-parental care) duration of care (hours of care; part-time/full-time) family type (sole parent; couple families - single / dual earner) age of youngest child family income group; family ethnic/cultural group rural/urban residence
Sphere of Care Arrangements	child's home relative's / friend's / neighbour's home family day care home / long day care / occasional care / community centre preschool &/or school (outside school hours care)
Nature of Care Arrangements	availability affordability -unpaid, paid, \$amount accessibility -singular or multiple arrangements quality -unregulated, regulated appropriate -cultural, educational / developmental

Sainsbury (1994, 1996) identified policy benefit characteristics pertinent to social policy analysis, such as the unit, basis, recipient and type of entitlement. Sainsbury also drew attention to the inclusion of familial ideology. This is incorporated into a

dimension, which identifies political ideologies and assumptions. The familial ideology is considered to be only one, albeit a very important one of a number of ideologies and assumptions that influence the gendered nature of child-care policy.

Two dimensions recognise the influence of various interest groups. The first gives credence to the influence of collective identities such as women's political/social groups on the development of child-care policy. The second acknowledges the influence of other social policies on the development and outcomes of child-care policy. For instance, economic policy dictates budget priorities that often impinge upon the available financial support afforded to child-care, while employment policy balances the interests of employers and employees, many of whom have to balance family and work responsibilities.

Policy outcomes impact upon individuals in a variety of ways. Esping-Andersen stressed the importance of the quality of social rights and social stratification as outcomes of policy formation and implementation. The quality of social rights has been measured in terms of political, economic and social participation. While Esping-Andersen pointed to decommodification as the primary criterion for social rights, feminists have demonstrated the need to also include commodification and non-commodification to account for women's experiences and access to paid work. Social stratification is visible as inequalities of class, gender and ethnicity and by the uneven distribution of paid and unpaid work. At the individual level such inequalities, whether reduced, reinforced or created by policy, impact upon personal autonomy and an individual's capacity to form and maintain an autonomous household. That is, to care for one's own children without being dependent upon the state.

More specifically, child-care and related policy impact upon individual and national patterns of child-care arrangements. Patterns of child-care arrangements draw attention to variations in the duration and regularity of various types of care arrangements used by different types of families for different purposes. The sphere of care, which concerns the site where the child-care is performed, also varies. It is interrelated with the types of care and impacts upon the nature of the care. It also determines the kind of government intervention likely to take place. The nature of care dimension is a measure of acceptability. It permits an evaluation of what is considered appropriate in terms of program content and standards of care. As such it provides an understanding of child-care arrangements that goes beyond knowledge of what is

available and affordable.

Summary

This gendered theoretical framework, based on feminist revisions of welfare state regimes and incorporating an institutional approach, is deemed necessary for the investigation of the political, social, economic and ideological underpinnings of child-care policy, particularly as it pertains to federal government involvement in child-care in two liberal welfare states. It permits the investigation of policy processes and welfare efforts, with an emphasis on development. Further, it allows an evaluation of expected and unexpected policy outcomes at both the societal and individual level. That is, policies can be compared in terms of access and entitlement to services and benefits, in cash and in kind, and their outcomes measured in terms of patterns of child-care arrangements. The dimensions against which child-care policy during the past decade and at present in Australia and Canada are compared incorporate revisions of original mainstream dimensions and feminist additions that take into consideration all of the institutions involved in the care of children. Collectively, these dimensions point to what counts in an analysis of child-care that aims to provide answers to the questions 'what for', 'on what terms', 'for whom', 'by what means', and 'to what effect' child-care and related policies in Australia and Canada influence child-care arrangements and, as a consequence, impact, respectively, upon the lives of Australian and Canadian women, men and children.

Institutional differences have given rise to differing child-care policies and subsequent arrangements for the care for children in Australia and Canada. The comparison on each of the dimensions in the institutional feminist framework, serves as a benchmark of description and classification and offers a logic by which we can account for unique features of the Australian and Canadian child-care situations. By comparing nations within the same liberal welfare state regime it is possible to reflect on recent developments in both countries with thought to a change of circumstances that may have produced choices somewhat other than they were and a resultant set of outcomes slightly different to what they are. Moreover, this 'most similar' research design offers a means of evaluating our own policies and outcomes, of highlighting unique responses to similar demographic, social and economic trends, and for identifying idiosyncratic outcomes and their possible causes. Where policies are found wanting, the analysis may provide possibilities for reform.

CHAPTER III

AUSTRALIA AND CANADA IN CONTRAST

Introduction

Australia and Canada are both advanced industrial welfare states which share similar socio-economic and political conditions. While these nation states differ in population by 10 million (Canada is the largest with 28 million people), they have similar levels of urbanisation, population density, age distribution, and birth, death and marriage rates. Immigration and multiculturalism have played a significant part in the development of ethnically diverse populations in both countries, both of which include a small indigenous population. Currencies and wage levels are almost equivalent, and labour force participation rates and unemployment figures run at similar levels. Perhaps most importantly, both countries have similar political traditions with parliamentary systems combining Westminster origins with federal constitutions, both have strong women's policy machinery and both democracies are favourable toward public advocacy groups. Although the states and provinces have constitutional jurisdiction over social welfare provision they rely heavily on federal funds to discharge many of their responsibilities. Consequently, the central governments have become deeply involved in the social welfare field and have opportunities to influence social policies of the states/provinces through financial controls (Jones, 1984).

The purpose of this chapter is to compare Australia and Canada in demographic, economic, and political terms. In so doing, institutional differences which may help explain the recent divergence in child-care policies and current care for children in these two welfare states are highlighted. In addition, the comparison serves as a benchmark of description and classification and offers us a logic by which we may account for features of the Australian and Canadian child-care situations (Castles, 1993).

The uneven development of family policies, in general, and child-care policies, more specifically, in different countries has been explained in terms of demographic, economic and/or political dissemblance. Demographic changes alter people's circumstances, influence ideas about the need for reform, and serve as an impetus for political lobbying for new legislation (Baker, 1995:19). Economic change also stimulates and provides a context for policy development and reform. Social programs are developed, maintained, expanded, reduced or cut in accordance with government

budgets which are based on economic policy and heavily influenced by both the national and global economy. Governments, however, react differently to comparable demographic and economic changes. Their responses are primarily guided by the dominant political ideology of the governing party, the effectiveness of political alliances, and the structure of decision making in the country (Baker, 1995).

Table 3.1: Selected Characteristics of Eight OECD Countries, 1992

COUNTRY	POPULATION JAN, 1993 (MILLIONS)	REAL GDP GROWTH (%)	CONSUMER PRICE INFLATION (%)	UNEMPLOYMENT RATE 1992
Australia	17.6	-1.9*	3.2*	10.1
Canada	28.6	1.6	1.5	10.2
France	57.5	1.2*	3.2*	10.1
Germany	80.6	0.8	4.0	5.0
Netherlands	15.2	1.1	3.7	6.4
Sweden	8.7	-1.3	2.3	4.1
UK	58.0	-0.8	3.8	9.9
USA	256.9	-1.2*	4.2*	6.7

GDP - Gross Domestic Product; *Percentages for 1991; UK - United Kingdom; USA - United States of America.

Source: (Baker, 1995: 32)

The following discussion is organised into demographic, economic and political considerations and focuses on cross-national and cross-temporal disparities. When compared with a number of other countries Australia and Canada look much alike, although on some measures they appear more similar to other nations than to one another. As Table 3.1 shows, while Australia's population of 18 million is approximately the same size as that of the Netherlands, in relation to most other industrial welfare states, it is not significantly different to Canada's 29 million. On the other hand, Canada's religious breakdown resembles that of Germany, while the religious make-up of Australia is more akin to that of the UK. In addition, the real GDP growth rate in Canada in 1992 was closer to that achieved by France and the Netherlands than reached by Australia, although perhaps more importantly, Australia and Canada suffered similar unemployment rates at this time.

Demographic Considerations

Since the 1960s the western world has been experiencing rapid social change which has affected the structure of the family, the population, the work force and, in particular, women's rates of participation in paid work (McDonald, 1990a). Delayed marriage, the postponement of childbearing and childrearing, an increase in marriage

breakdown and a reduction in the size of families are demographic factors most frequently considered associated with changes in married women's participation in paid employment. Furthermore, demographic changes impacting upon families inevitably affect the care of children (Lero, 1993). These trends, for the most part, are a feature of most advanced industrial welfare states.

Table 3.2: Population^a, Sex Ratio, Age Distribution, Birth, Death, Fertility, Marriage and Divorce Rates, Australia and Canada, 1975-1995.

DIMENSION	CANADA			AUSTRALIA		
Year	1975	1985	1995	1975	1985	1995
Population ('000)						
Total	23209	25942	29463	13900	15641	18088
Males	11620	12890	14593	6976	7802	9029
Females	11589	13052	14870	6924	7839	9059
Population density (per sq. km)	2	2	3	2	2	2
Sex ratio (per 100 females)	100.3	98.8	98.1	100.7	99.5	99.7
Age distribution						
0-4	1773	1850	2164	1280	1225	1313
5-9	1940	1821	1984	1265	1167	1293
10-14	2356	1844	1990	1290	1299	1291
15-24	4560	4554	3932	2420	2671	2577
25-34	3622	4695	4905	2093	2556	2899
35-59	6098	7398	9811	3776	4456	5818
60+	2860	3783	4677	1778	2269	2796
Five Year Period	1970-75	1980-85	1990-95	1970-75	1980-85	1990-95
Crude birth rate (per '000 pop.)	16.0	15.2	15.1	19.6	15.6	14.8
Crude death rate (per '000 pop.)	7.4	7.1	7.6	8.5	7.3	7.4
Total fertility rate (per woman)	1.97	1.66	1.86	2.53	1.93	1.87
Infant mortality rate (per '000 births)	16	9	7	17	10	7
Life expectancy at birth (years)						
Total	73.1	75.9	77.4	71.7	75.2	77.6
Males	69.7	72.4	74.2	68.4	71.9	74.7
Females	76.8	79.6	80.7	75.2	78.7	80.6
Year	1971	1981	1991	1971	1981	1991
Marriage rate (per 1000 pop. >15 years)	8.9	7.0	6.5	9.0	7.6	6.6
Divorce rate (per 1,000 marriages)	1.38	2.58	2.81	0.99	2.67	2.64

^a See Appendix A for Population breakdown by province/state and territory for Australia and Canada.

Sources: United Nations (1992,1994a, 1994b); ABS (1993:23); McDonald (1995:21-22).

Canada and Australia constitute large land masses sparsely populated by people of primarily Anglo-Saxon and European heritage, who live mostly in large cities that form a strip 150 kilometres wide along the Canadian - US border and along the south-east

and west-east coasts of Australia. Forty-five percent of the 28.6 million Canadians and 54 per cent of the 17.6 million Australians live in urbanised centres of 500,000 people or more. The spread of the population has given rise to a sense of regionalism in both countries, but perhaps having a greater effect in Canada than in Australia. While the populations differ, both countries have similar population densities, age distributions, birth, infant mortality, death and marriage rates and levels of immigration, as shown in Table 3.2. All of these have contributed to comparable population growth rates that have ranged from 1.0 to 1.5 per cent over the past twenty years.

The structure of families in Australia, Canada and in many other advanced industrial welfare states has been changing (Eichler, 1988; McDonald, 1990a, 1995). Marriage is later, less frequent and less permanent than it was a generation ago (McNicoll, 1993). Delayed marriage is indicated by the rise in the proportion of single women in the twenty to twenty-four year age group. Rising divorce rates operate in complementary fashion to reduce the proportions married in the population. Divorce rates were fairly constant in Australia, Canada, the United Kingdom and Sweden in the 1980s, where around 25 to 30 per cent of marriages ended in divorce. The rate in the USA was and continues to be much higher with nearly one in two marriages ending in divorce (see Table 3.2). In 1992 Australia's divorce rate (2.6 per 1000 population) was less than that in Canada (2.8) which in turn was slightly lower than the UK rate (2.9) and much lower than the rate in the USA (4.8).

Some of the recent shifts in formal marriage patterns have been offset by cohabitation, or common-law marriage (McNicoll, 1993). Although the majority of individuals living in defacto relationships are 30 years of age or younger and have never married, children are increasingly present. This has led to a rise in the proportion of extra-marital births. In comparison to other OECD countries, the proportion of ex-nuptial births in Canada and Australia has been low (around 15%), although 48 per cent of first-born children in Quebec are now born to parents who live 'common-law' (Le Bourdais and Marcil-Gratton, 1994, cited in Baker, 1995:52)¹. Cohabitation has become so common that in many countries, including Canada and Australia, couples are considered to be married if they have cohabited in a heterosexual relationship for at least twelve months or have produced a child from that relationship.

¹ Sweden has the highest proportion (50% in 1987), followed by the USA, UK and France (over 20%).

The increases in ex-nuptial births and proportion of marriages that have ended in separation or divorce have resulted in an increase in the number of lone parent households in Australia and elsewhere. Lone parent families in Canada increased as a percentage of all families with children from 11 per cent to 20 per cent from 1961 to 1991. A similar shift occurred in Australia: the proportion of lone parent families rose from 9.2 per cent in 1974 to 16.7 per cent in 1992. The majority of lone parent households are headed by women (88% of all sole parent families in Australia and 82% in Canada) who have been separated or divorced. Female lone parent households predominate because it is women who bear the children and are readily identifiable as parents, mothers are more likely than fathers to choose custody, and judges tend to assume children's interests are better served by maternal custody after divorce (Baker, 1995:63). Of all families with dependent children in Australia and Canada, female sole parent families are much more likely to have low incomes, to rent their accommodation or live with another family and are most vulnerable to poverty. Sole mothers in Australia are also less likely to be employed than mothers in couple families (Evans, 1993; Baker, 1996) and are less likely to have access to a car (McDonald, 1995:22). Female lone parents in Canada are more likely to be employed (only 24 per cent of sole mothers did not participate in the labour force in 1993), although they tend to earn low wages and work part time (Evans, 1993; Baker, 1996). Consequently, fifty-eight per cent of lone mothers in Canada were living below the poverty line in 1992. Poverty rates vary depending upon the level of income support provided by governments for families with children, direct services such as child-care to enable mothers to enter the labour force during child-rearing years, and government-guaranteed support payments for a child of divorced parents (McFate, 1991 cited in Baker, 1995:65).

Since the 1970s fertility rates in all advanced industrial states have been declining. This has been caused, in part, by the increased availability of contraception. Rising costs and pressures of raising children and earning a living have also driven upward the median ages of men and women when they first marry and when they experience the arrival of their first child, as indicated in Table 3.3 (overleaf). Consequently, couples tend to produce fewer dependent children and families have become smaller as well as less permanent. For women, fewer children mean more time and opportunity to become educated, acquire some leisure time, participate in the labour force, and gain a higher standard of living compared to earlier generations (Baker, 1995:48). Families also benefit from having fewer children by gaining a higher

standard of living and higher quality care for each existing child. The state, however, tends to view falling birth rates as a precursor to an aging population which raises concerns about higher dependency ratios, a declining tax base, greater pension and medical expenditures, and declining economic productivity and prosperity (Baker, 1995:48).

Table 3.3: Selected Family Statistics, Australia and Canada, 1971-1991

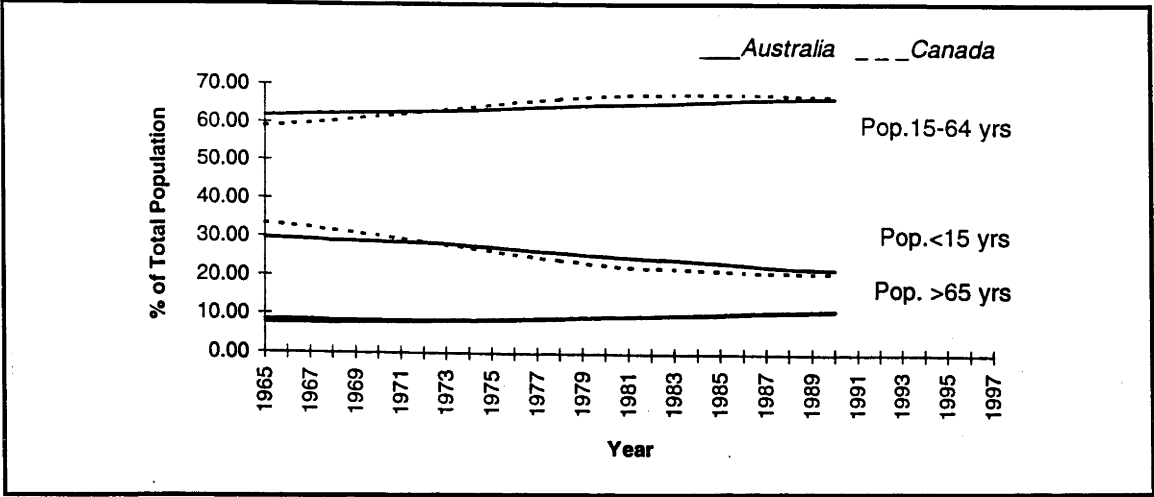
DIMENSION	CANADA			AUSTRALIA		
	1971	1981	1991	1971	1981	1991
Median age first marriage						
Males	24.9	25.7	27.7	24	25	26.7
Females	22.6	23.5	25.7	21	22	24.5
Median age group of mother at birth of first child	20-24	20-24*	25-29	20-24	25-29	25-29
Percentage of women in median age group at birth of first child	43.8%	37.4%	38.1%	35.6%	37.4%	35.7%
No. of first births women 30-34 age	48778	67681	103357	39600	46937	71312
First births to 30-34 year olds as percentage of all births	7.1%	11.3%	25.5%	14.3%	19.9%	27.7%
No. Ex-nuptial births	(1975) 27800		(1986) 62700			
		45600	(1987) 62700	25400	31000	58600
Divorces involving children as a percentage of all divorces	55.4%	51.9%	35.6%	67.6%	60.5%	54.2%
No. of lone parent families with children					(1986)	
All lone parent families	388.7	714010	954600	na	270200	378000
% Female headed	79.0%	82.6%	82.4%			
No. of lone parent families as a percentage of all families with dependent children				(1974) 9.2%	14.6%	16.6%

*Median age is 24.5 years

Sources: ABS (1988/1993, 1993a, 1993b); McDonald (1995:21-22); Baker (1995); Statistics Canada (1990).

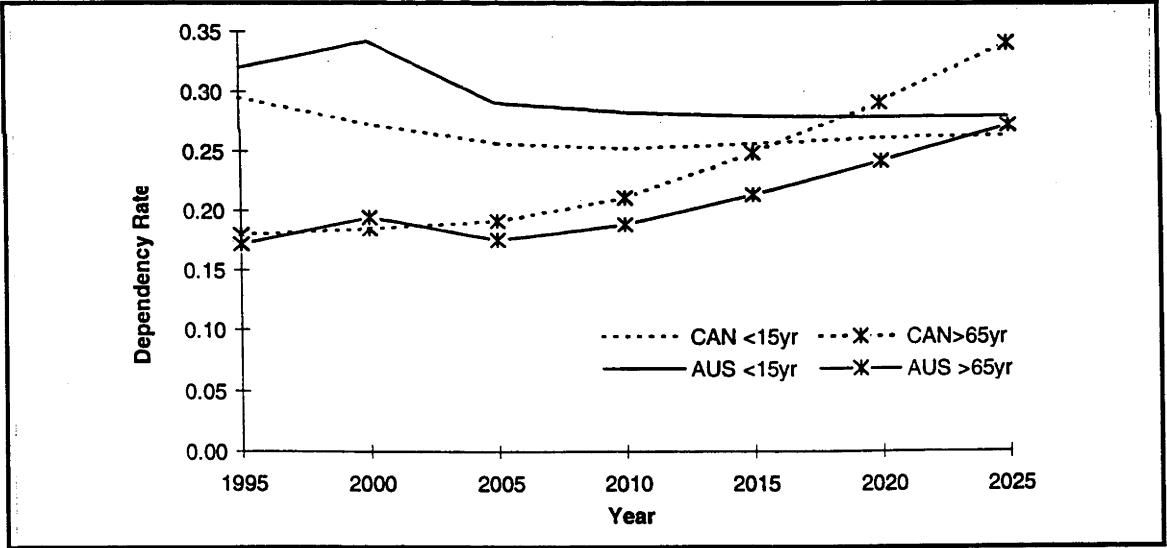
In 1971 the proportion of children under 15 years of age as a percentage of the total population was only a fraction higher in Canada than it was in Australia. At the same time the proportion of the population between 15 to 64 years (workforce age) was slightly lower in Canada. These dimensions, shown on Figure 3.1 (below), were almost identical in 1972 but have since diverged, peaking in the early 1980s with Australia displaying a relatively higher proportion of children and a lower proportion of 15 to 64 year olds than in Canada. This pattern has persisted in conjunction with an overall decline in children as a proportion of the total population in both countries. Indeed, projected dependency rates, depicted in Figure 3.2 (below), indicate that this trend will continue, more rapidly in Canada, resulting in a crossover from children to the elderly (those 65 years of age and older) as the largest dependent group in Canada around the year 2017 and in Australia ten years later.

Figure 3.1: Age Groups as a Percentage of the Total Population, Australia and Canada, 1965 - 1990.



Source: OECD Transfer Series Household Transfer Database. Historical Statistics

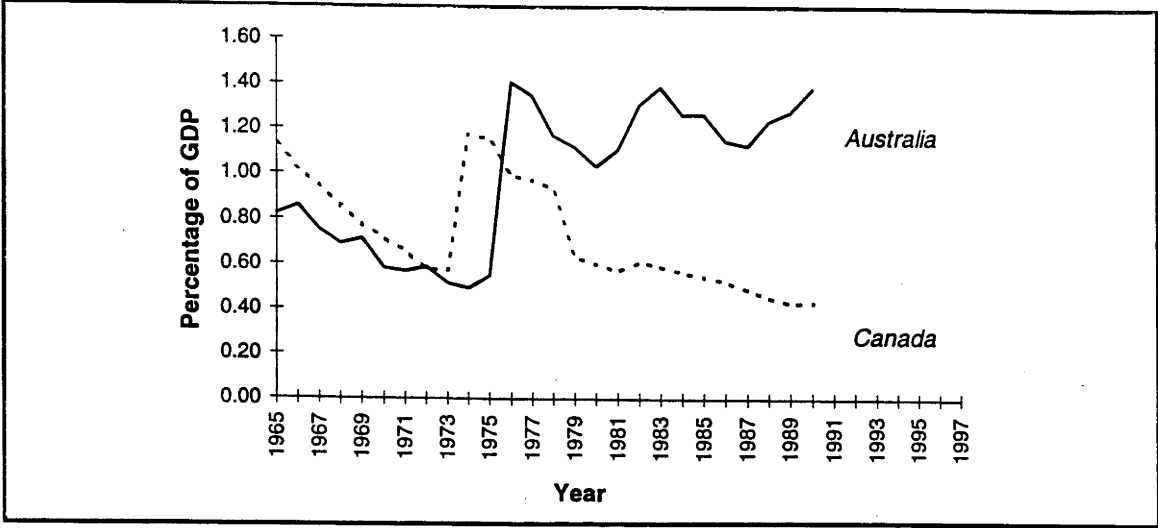
Figure 3.2: Old Age and Child Projected Dependency Rates, Australia and Canada, 1995 - 2025.



Source : UN (1991a, 1994a)

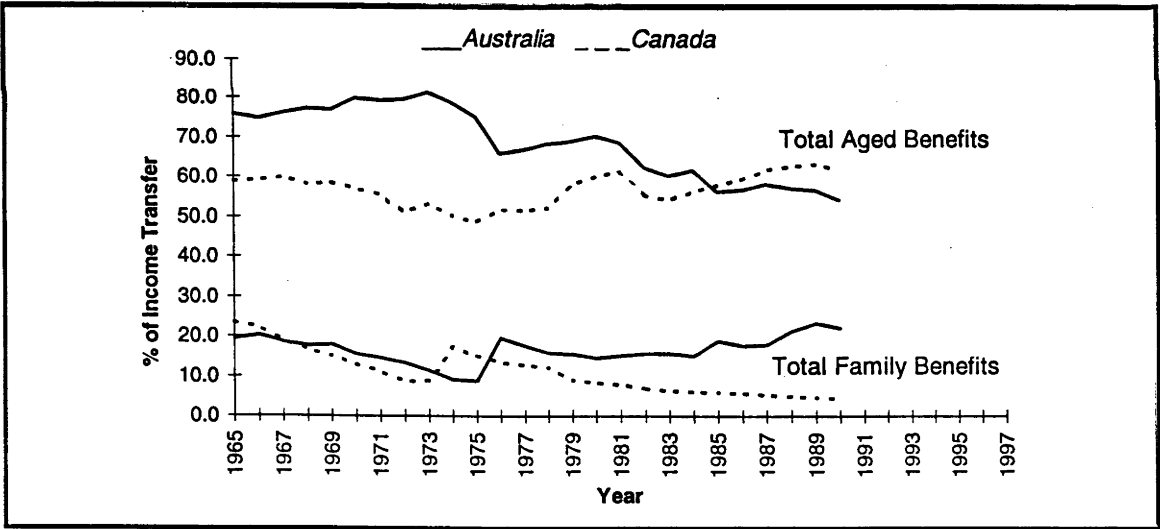
The federal governments' responses to shifts in population distribution and dependency rates are indicated, to a degree, by the changes in family benefits as a percentage of GDP and as a percentage of income transfer budgets. Figure 3.3 (overleaf) clearly illustrates that since 1976 family benefits in Australia have remained higher than one percent of GDP while in Canada the rate has steadily declined falling below one percent. This divergence is even more visible when family benefits are viewed as a percentage of income transfer budgets illustrated in Figure 3.4 (overleaf).

Figure 3.3: Family Benefits as a Percentage of GDP, Australia and Canada, 1965-1990.



Source : OECD Transfer Series Household Transfer Database. Historical Statistics

Figure 3.4: Family Benefits as a Percentage of Income Transfers, Australia and Canada, 1965 - 1990.



Source : OECD Transfer Series Household Transfer Database. Historical Statistics

Childbearing continues to be spread fairly widely over the reproductive ages in Australia, Canada and in most other advanced industrial welfare states. Women in their 30s however, have increasingly made a substantial contribution to total fertility during the past twenty years. Women have tended to remain childless as long as the costs (age, job considerations, lifestyle) of making the actual decision to have a child loom large (Westoff, 1987 cited in McNicoll, 1993:63). Simultaneously, fertility at very young ages has displayed a downward trend. Only in the USA has the rate remained

fairly constant; a proportion of around fifteen per cent of births to women below age twenty is twice the rate for Australia, Canada, and the UK, and four times that of France and Sweden (McNicoll, 1993; Baker, 1995). It is not surprising then that children disproportionately come from poorer and less educated parents, 'in some part, from parents made poorer or hindered from gaining education by having children' (McNicoll, 1993:64-65). Despite or in spite of varied policies to promote better education and employment opportunities for disadvantaged families, the potential effect of family size distribution on intergenerational economic mobility remains roughly similar across low-fertility countries.

A key demographic change, which is closely linked to the economic environment of a country, has been the sharp increase in female participation in the labour force. Both push and pull factors have been at work to create a two way causal link between falling marriage and fertility rates and the growth of female employment, especially among married women with children. Women have been pushed out into the labour market to supplement or provide the family income in response to increasing economic insecurity resulting from the relative decline in wages compared with rises in the cost of living, and increasing unemployment and divorce rates. Growth in the service industry and in part-time work (both considered 'attractive' for women) has tended to pull women into the work force. It has also been suggested that as fertility rates declined women devote a smaller proportion of their lives to childrearing and thus have more time to participate in the labour market. Conversely, it has been said that greater labour market commitment by women has caused the change in marriage and fertility patterns. Either way, the growth in the labour force participation of women in Australia and Canada, as shown in Table 3.4, is indisputable.

Table 3.4: Labour Force Participation Rates of all Men, all Women, and Married Women, Canada and Australia, 1971 -1996.

YEAR	CANADA					AUSTRALIA				
	% LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION					% LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION				
	All Men	All Women	FT % of all Women	PT % of all Women	Married Women	All Men	All Women	FT % of all Women	PT % of all Women	Married Women
1971	77.3	39.4	na	na	37.0	82.5	40.0	72.0	28.0	33.0
1976	77.6	45.2	78.9	21.1	42.9	80.0	43.0	62.3	37.7	43.5
1981	78.4	51.7	76.7	23.3	50.5	77.5	44.4	64.8	35.2	44.5
1986	77.6	55.3	74.3	25.7	56.5	75.1	47.6	62.1	37.9	50.0
1991	76.4	59.9	75.6	24.4	63.2	74.1	51.5	59.1	40.1	52.6
1996	na	na	na	na	na	73.7	53.8	52.3	39.0	52.0

Sources : Luxton & Reiter (1993:77); ABS (1992:205); ABS (1997a); Statistics Canada (1990).

The growth in participation rates for all women has been accompanied by a decline in participation rates of men. While the decline in the percentage of males participating in the labour force has been greater in Australia than in Canada, the rise in female participation rates has been markedly more in Canada. It is currently about 10 percent higher in Canada than in Australia for similar groups of married women and for all women 15 years of age and over. It is also interesting to note that 75 per cent of women working in waged labour in Canada work full time as compared to only 60 per cent of Australian women. That is equivalent to 15 per cent more women working part-time in Australia than in Canada. However, the variance is exaggerated by different definitions of part-time work: in Canada part-time work is defined as less than 30 hours per week while in Australia it is defined as less than 35 hours per week. Note too, that 20 per cent of part-time workers in Australia worked 30 to 34 hours per week in 1990. Nevertheless, when the part-time figures are adjusted to account for this there still remains a 10 percent difference between the proportion of part-time female workers in Canada and in Australia (O'Connor, 1993a).

The variation in the proportions of women working full time and part-time in Canada and Australia appear to have developed during the past two decades and may well have contributed to the somewhat disparate child-care needs and provisions in both countries. The dissimilarity between the two countries may, in part, be attributed to a disparity in wage rates. Women in Canada have a lower female to male earnings ratio than their Australian counterparts, as seen in Table 3.5 (overleaf). The ratio of female to male earnings for manual workers in manufacturing in 1988 was even greater with Australia (79.6%) having a ratio 14.6 per cent higher than that in Canada (65.0%). The female to male wage ratio for full-time non-managerial employees in Australia is effected by the discrepancy in overtime hours and earnings (ABS, 1997:141). While both female and male employees worked, on average, 38 hours of ordinary time per week in 1996, females worked only 21.4 percent of the overtime hours worked by males. Further, this lack of access to, or inability to work overtime for female non-managerial employees in Australia, is compounded by the 21.2 percent female to male wage ratio for overtime earnings. Longer work hours and higher participation rates may well be required for Canadian women and their families to achieve an adequate income to cover the costs of living, despite all wages generally being higher in Canada. As Luxton and Reiter (1993) and Bradbury (1993) have argued increases in women's participation in the labour force in Canada and in Australia, respectively, have not been

accompanied by increases in gender equality measured in terms of personal consumption and leisure time.

Table 3.5: Average Yearly Earnings* and Female to Male Wage Ratios for Full Time Workers, Canada and Australia, 1971- 1996².

YEAR	CANADA			AUSTRALIA		
	FT Male Wage (\$)	FT Female Wage (\$)	Female to Male Wage Ratio	FT Male Wage (\$)	FT Female Wage (\$)	Female to Male Wage Ratio
1971	34,727	20,717	59.7	na	na	65.0
1976	41,818	24,730	59.1	na	na	na
1981	38,318	24,442	63.7	17,010	12,770	75.1
1986	38,085	25,065	65.8	24,284	19,189	79.1
1991	38,567	26,842	69.6	33,332	26,572	79.8
1996	39,433	28392	72.0	39,832	31,460	79.0

*Total earnings includes both ordinary time and overtime earnings for both managerial and non-manual workers.

Sources: Luxton & Reiter (1993:78); Statistics Canada (1993a); ABS (1992); ABS (1997a).

Table 3.6: Labour Force Participation of all Women With Dependent Children^a and Sole Mothers by Age of Youngest Child, Canada and Australia, 1975-1995.

Year	CANADA ^B						AUSTRALIA ^C					
	All Women			Sole Mothers			All Women			Sole Mothers		
	0-2 years	3-5 years	6-12 years	0-2 years	3-5 years	6-12 years	0-4 years	5-9 years	10-14 years	0-4 years	5-9 years	10-14 years
1975	31.2	40.0	48.2	na	na	na		42.2			48.3	
1981	44.4	52.4	61.2	31.6	51.4	61.6		44.5		35.1		42.8
1985	53.9	59.5	66.2	34.1	47.3	58.3	37.0	57.0	61.0	31.3	44.0	53.3
1991	60.1	66.2	76.4	30.8	47.4	62.2	45.0	66.0	72.0	na	na	na
1996	60.8	67.5	75.8	na	na	na	46.0	65.5	72.0	32.3	45.6	52.8

^a All women with dependent children under 18 years of age. ^bFigures listed for 1991 and 1996 are for 1990 and 1992 respectively. ^cFigures given for Australia in 1975 and 1981 include dependents 0-14 years for 1975 and 0-9, 10-14 for 1980.

Sources: Friendly (1994:32); ABS (1977,1981, 1986, 1991); ABS (1996); Statistics Canada (1995).

Although the government assists families financially with their childrearing responsibilities, it is women who perform the labour associated with having children. Child-care is the most difficult component of women's domestic labour to combine with wage work. As more and more women with children have entered, re-entered or

² Female to Male Wage Ratios are averages for all full year full time workers. Ratios vary depending on labour force experience: e.g. in 1989-90 the Australian female to male wage ratio varied from 67.3 for part-year part-time workers to a high of 88.7 for full year part-time workers, and in 1996 the Australian female to male wage ratios ranged from 89% of men's ordinary time earnings for non-manual workers to 75% of men's total time average earnings for managerial workers. Difference in Canadian women's and men's wages reflect a decline in men's earnings, and figures for all earners demonstrate lower yearly wages and ratios for each year.

remained in the work force, more of them have had to cope with this difficulty. This is perhaps best demonstrated by viewing the labour force participation of women by age of youngest child, as displayed in Table 3.6 (above). During the 1970s, labour force participation rates for women with young children were somewhat lower than those for all women in Canada, however, by the end of the 1980s, labour force participation of these mothers had surpassed that of all women (Friendly, 1994:32).

The proportion of women and men with dependent children participating in the labour force is the same (38 per cent of employed Australian women and 38 per cent of employed Australian men had dependent children in 1995 (AIFS, 1997:84)). However, the presence of dependent children and the ages of those children strongly influence women's labour force participation (Moyle, Golley & Meyer, 1995; Meyer et al, 1996) without a corresponding influence on the participation rates of men. As Table 3.6 indicates, labour force participation rates of women increase as the age of their youngest child increases. In 1996, for example, the labour force participation rates of Australian mothers was 46 per cent for those whose youngest child was 0-4, rising to 65.5 per cent where the youngest child was 5-9 years and up to 72 per cent for those whose youngest child was 10-14 years. A decade earlier these participation rates were 37%, 57% and 66.1%, respectively.

The trend of increasing labour force participation rates in conjunction with increases in the age of the youngest child is perhaps most prominent among Australian women with children below school age (0-6 years). In 1991 the labour force participation rate for Australian mothers with a child under 1 year was 38 per cent. This rate increased to 49 per cent for those whose youngest child was 1 year old, rising to 55 per cent for those whose youngest child was aged 4, and reached 62 per cent for mothers with a child aged 5 years, the age when most children begin school (Meyer, et al, 1996). This trend appears to be less pronounced for Canadian women who exhibit a higher participation rate overall.

Marital status also affects women's labour force participation. That is, participation rates are higher for mothers in couple families than for sole or lone mothers, at least in Australia. A higher proportion of sole mothers, however, work full time. In 1991, for instance, 48 per cent of mothers with a child 0-4 years in couple families were in the labour force compared to 31 per cent of sole mothers whose youngest child was 0-4 years, and 39 per cent of sole mothers in this group worked full time compared with 34

per cent of similarly grouped couple mothers (Meyer, et al, 1996:3). In contrast, the participation rates for Canadian sole mothers is almost as high as it is for all Canadian mothers. For example, in 1988, 67.0 per cent of all women with dependent children under 18 years of age participated in the labour force while the rate for sole mothers was less that 4 percentage points lower at 63.6 per cent. Again, the difference is greatest for those women with a dependent child under 3 years of age, with labour force participation rates being 58.4 per cent for all women whose youngest child is 0-2 years and 41.3 per cent for similarly grouped lone mothers.

Table 3.7: Labour Force Participation Rates for Males and Females, Select Countries, 1970 and 1990.

COUNTRY	WOMEN		MEN		WOMEN AS % OF TOTAL LABOUR FORCE
		%		%	
	1970	1990	1970	1990	1990
Australia	37	46	82	77	38
Canada	37	49	79	78	40
France	39	45	75	71	40
Netherlands	26	31	74	71	31
Sweden	41	55	76	71	45
United Kingdom	41	46	82	77	39
United States	42	50	78	77	41

Source: (Baker, 1995: 32).

A fairly consistent trend in patterns of female labour force participation over time has been found to exist for western industrialised countries. McNicoll describes this as occurring in three phases: Initially, the distribution of the proportion of age groups in the labour force displays a peak at ages twenty to twenty-four and a decline at later ages as women leave to marry or have a child; then a peak also develops in the thirty-five to fifty-five age range as women re-enter the labour market when their children grow up; and finally, an inverted U-shape schedule forms, roughly resembling the male pattern, as low fertility rates and family friendly employment and social policies make market work and the care of children more compatible. Canada, France, Sweden and the USA are considered to have essentially reached stage three, though in the USA this is not usually related to the existence of policies cognisant of family responsibilities. The rapid increase of labour force participation rates of Canadian women has been attributed largely to the rising cost of living and to high male unemployment during the 1970s and 1980s (Baker, 1995:53). As Table 3.7 indicates, the rate of male employment has also decreased in Australia, France, the Netherlands, Sweden, the UK, and the USA throughout this period. Nonetheless, Australia still witnesses a significant withdrawal of women from the labour market during peak

childbearing ages and the early years of childrearing, as does the UK, Germany and even more so the Netherlands.

The increase in women's labour force participation in Australia has been associated with the increased importance of women's income to families and an increased demand for female workers. The latter is associated with

(a) structural changes in the economy (the shift from agriculture, mining and manufacturing to services), and (b) the improved education of women relative to men. (Meyer et al, 1996:4)

Further, as Meyer et al have noted

[t]he increasing levels of education among women, together with efforts towards equal employment conditions and other rights, have enabled women to have greater autonomy in the form of career goals, economic independence, and access to their own resources for retirement. (1996:4)

All of these factors attract women into the labour force even as the necessity of a second income for family survival increasingly impels them to do so. Moreover, changes in family values and attitudes toward women have also helped increase women's labour force participation, not in the least by influencing family-friendly employment and social policies. 'As women gained political rights and greater access to higher education, they raised their expectations about using their education to support themselves and their families and to make a contribution to society' (Baker, 1995:54). The feminist movement of the 1970s drew attention to the liberal concept of 'equal opportunity'. This has since been embraced in many countries, in some cases interpreted literally, in others considered more broadly. For instance, the United States does not acknowledge that women's life chances are not always the same as men's and does not recognise workers' family responsibilities, while Sweden has actively promoted and reinforced equality between men and women in the labour force for many years by providing public child-care and generous benefits for family responsibilities.

As has been demonstrated in this section, similar demographic changes have occurred in Australia and Canada that have pushed or pulled women into employment. The continuing increase in women's participation in the labour force has subsequently given rise to the demand for non-parental forms of child-care. Governments can and have assisted women's workforce participation with the provision of formal child-care services. Indeed, Corbert has demonstrated that there is an important link between the provision of child-care and the ability or willingness of women to move into the labour force. Her research has indicated that

child care services come first in the sense that participation rises following increases in the real contribution of the public sector to child care availability. ... It is clear that expanding the infrastructure of formal child care provision is a significant micro economic reform. (Corbert, 1993:32)

Economic Considerations

Government spending on social programs is dependent on the conditions impinging upon the national and, to a lesser extent though by no means less important, global economy. Welfare states developed primarily between 1950s and 1970s, during a period of economic prosperity which allowed for the expansion of the public sector and increased government expenditure. Since the mid-1970s, the world economy has taken a downturn and most industrialised countries have become fixated with the reduction of government expenditure, rationing of benefits and services and increasing reliance on user-pays principles and privatisation. As a consequence many welfare states have cut back or at best maintained their social programs.

Probert (1994) suggests that recent changes in the world economy, i.e., restructuring and globalisation reflect the transition from Fordism to Post-Fordism, from mass production to flexible specialisation. These theoretical terms also refer to associated modes of social and political regulation. Three key elements of the Fordist model which account for the post-World War II years of economic growth and political and social stability in the advanced industrial countries are considered to include a social pact between capital and labour, a general acceptance of (Keynesian) state regulation and intervention into the economic sphere, and the setting up of mechanisms to control the increasingly international economic order (Probert, 1994:102). The new post-Fordist model of capitalism that has developed has altered these elements: capital has succeeded in appropriating a significantly higher share of profits by weakening labour, state intervention has shifted toward 'political domination' and capital accumulation (a new form of intervention), and the expansion of the system has accelerated the internationalisation of all economic processes to increase profitability (Probert, 1994:103-4). A critical role is played by information and communication technologies in this transformation. They promote the centralisation of knowledge which is necessary for the effective accomplishment of the internationalisation process.

According to John Ravenhill, 'Australia is a small, peripheral economy, heavily dependent on the export of primary commodities, and has always been vulnerable to shocks transmitted by the global economy' (1994:75). Up until the 1980s Australian

governments sought to bolster the domestic market by employing a strategy of 'social protection'. Paradoxically, the isolationist policies and the success of the primary product sector during the last hundred and fifty years created a closed economy (third only to Japan and the USA, economies with significantly larger domestic markets), ill-equipped to cope with the increasingly competitive global economy and 'new mercantilism' of the past twenty years. Despite consecutive Labor Governments since 1983 pursuing an active strategy of trade diplomacy in an effort to promote trade liberalisation, Australia may be closed off from some of its diverse trading partners as they become restricted by protectionist regional trading blocs. For instance, the European Community is now the site for 20 per cent of world trade and with the signing of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) the United States, the single most important player in the global economy and the most enthusiastic proponent of regional protectionism, has formed a trading bloc with Canada and Mexico. Canada is already largely dependent on its southern neighbour for importing 72 per cent of its exports. This pattern of relative trade decline has seen a ballooning of Australia's current account deficit (Bell & Head, 1994:12). Consequently, the government has been pressured into making some structural adjustments to the Australian economy. In recent years efforts have thus focused on reduced national protectionism, the diversification of products, services and manufacturing exports and increasing integration of Australia into the international economy.

Economic adjustment has had a number of significant effects on the operation of the welfare state. As Bryson has argued, economic adjustment in Australia has weakened the centralised regulation of wages and employment conditions, altered tariff protection and created changes in immigration policy, transformed the income security system, and led to the more detailed development of the coverage of social security entitlements, the intensification of surveillance of social security recipients and the increasing linkage of eligibility to explicit demonstrations of commitment to labour force participation (1994:292). These effects, particularly those concerning income and social security, are clearly evident in the recent changes to policies relating to the care of children, taken up in the following chapter.

The Canadian governments of the past twenty years have also responded to the downturn in the global economy with the rhetoric of economic rationalism providing economic globalism as the rationale for a preoccupation with deficit reduction and welfare spending cuts (Baker, 1995). While there is general agreement that the deficit

is a problem³, there are varying ideas about what has caused it and not everyone thinks that it should be reduced through cuts to income security and social programs. While some conservatives have attributed the deficit to overly generous increases in social spending by consecutive governments, Mimoto and Cross have demonstrated that the Canadian debt has climbed as a consequence of high unemployment which has reduced government revenue, rises in interest rates, and alterations to the tax system effectively decreasing revenues from corporate income tax and higher-income earners (1991 cited in Baker, 1995:22). Reforms to the income tax system, reduction in interest-free loans to corporations and the development of policies less like those of the United States have thus been presented as alternatives to reducing the deficit by cutting social spending (McQuiag 1993). With the advent of NAFTA, however, Canadian policies have become increasingly 'harmonised' with US policies.

The workings of national economies have clearly not been without political intervention. Through economic policy individual governments have helped create conditions which have shaped their own economies, and collectively their efforts have influenced changes in the world economy. Typically, governments aim for economic stability and external trade balance, but many seek, for electoral reasons, to induce economic growth at a higher rate than that achieved by comparable nations. Indeed, the interaction between the state and the economy is highly politicised:

although it is commonplace to speak of 'government' intervention in the economy, in reality a wide range of public institutions have an impact on the economy. ... *The state* is a collective institutional term, useful in forms of analysis that see public policy outputs as resulting not just from the actions of government but also from wider patterns of activity and institutional dynamics within the state, particularly the role of key departments and independent statutory authorities. (Bell & Head, 1994:3)

Economic restructuring and globalisation have been prominent features of the economic climate in Australia and Canada throughout the 1980s and 1990s, with economic rationalism an immutable part of the political rhetoric. The downturn in the world economy forced governments to think about deficit reduction. They responded, for the most part, with cuts to social welfare spending, some more severe than others.

³ In 1993 the Canadian deficit was 6% of GDP at \$42 billion. In its 1997 election platform the Liberal Government promised to continue to reduce the deficit, balance the budget and put the debt-to-GDP ratio on a downward track as the means to jobs, lower interest rates and the restoration of consumer and business confidence. It was claimed that in the 1996-97 financial year the deficit would fall below the set target of 3% and that the debt-to-GDP ratio would register its first meaningful decline since 1974-75 (Liberal Party of Canada, 1996).

As a minor social program in Canada, child-care services have suffered from severe budget cuts at all levels of government. In contrast, the impact of these economic changes on child-care in Australia has been latent, at least until recently. Formal child-care services in Australia not only survived, they thrived. As will be explained in the ensuing chapters, this was primarily related to the function of child-care in Australian Commonwealth economic and employment policy.

Political Considerations

In liberal democratic countries the power and authority of the state is often fragmented. Government's policy and administrative capacities are constrained by the state's ability to raise revenue through taxation or borrowing, bureaucratic routines and judicial independence. The level of autonomy and policy capacities of national and regional governments are circumscribed by constitutional mandate. It is for these reasons that it has been argued that federalism, primarily the division of powers between the various levels of government, defines the character of national institutions, reflects national histories, echoes national vices, impedes maturity and preserves peace (Pal, 1987).

Both the Canadian provinces and the Australian states have authority in areas of social, health, and education policy development enshrined in constitutional powers. Political pressures have resulted in greater decentralisation in Canada where the British North America Act of ¹⁸⁶⁷~~1987~~ provided for a more centralist form of federalism while liberal interpretation of Australia's Constitution Act of 1900 and the employment of tied grants has given the Commonwealth more power and influence over the States (Alexander & Galligan, 1992; Eddy, 1993; Bell & Head, 1994; Groenewegen, 1994). The Australian Commonwealth government has gained considerable control over income taxation and social security and has increasingly exercised its influence over the development and delivery of state based education, health and children's services since federation. A series of Commonwealth-State conferences has led to a good deal of cooperation between the Australian States and the Commonwealth over economic restructuring and in the establishment of national regulatory standards since the early 1980s (Bell & Head, 1995:5-6), whereas a history of resistance to central authority rooted in a bi-cultural heritage and /or intense regionalism and Canada's less frequent interprovincial and later Dominion-Provincial conferences have encouraged federal accommodation with the demands of the provinces (Eddy, 1993). The increasing

centralism of the Australian polity has been so dominant in the national psyche that it has been suggested to be the 'main historical factor, and the surest benchmark in the formation and development of an Australian national identity' (Eddy, 1993:27).

Reflections during Australia's bicentennial year and new concerns about the impact of globalisation on Australian policy making have revived the federalism debate. As a consequence, the suitability of federalism to deal with economic restructuring, the 'new politics' of feminism, sustainable economic development, human rights and peace, has been questioned (Eddy, 1993). According to Galligan,

Federalism has been quite compatible with major policy restructuring in the 1980s when a federal Labor government moved Australian national policy beyond protection while at the same time holding to fiscal restraint during a period of sustained recession. The 'New Federalism' of the early 1990s suggests that federal arrangements are also malleable and can be restructured to produce national outcomes through consensual institutions. (1997:190)

The debate is likely to intensify as the centenary of Australian federation (2001) draws nearer and efforts to write a new constitution continue.

Canada adopted a new constitution in 1982 with the passing of the Constitution Act. The process was powered by the perception that it was time to increase the stature and power of central institutions, and to shift away from provincial ascendancy to national priorities, from regional protection to national adjustment, from narrow loyalties to national allegiances (Pal, 1987). Federalism in Canada is a combination of the division of powers defined in the Constitution Act of 1982, the core remaining that of the British North America Act, and of the decisions and policies which circumvent the constitution's loose restrictions on federal and provincial jurisdiction. The new constitution is, by some accounts, an awkward and badly drafted compromise between federal and provincial agendas⁴. As Pal suggests,

[t]he numerous qualifications of important principles and the use of unfamiliar terms will have to be sorted out by the courts and the legislature, and ultimately the Canadian people over the coming years. ... Rationalisation and development of programs will continue to be a matter of inter-governmental bargaining and individual legislative initiative, and these depend on social and political forces more fundamental than a constitution. (1987:18)

⁴ Indeed, the development of a new federalism that can incorporate the rights of Quebec as a distinct society has taken up a good deal of political time and energy during the past decade, witnessing the failure of two accords.

The social forces referred to here, most already discussed in early sections of this chapter, include the changing demographic structure of society, new family forms, the increasing reality and social acceptance of women's participation in the labour force and subsequent recognition of the public's responsibility for the care of children, and the social construction of mothering and masculinity⁵. Political forces considered to impact upon policy-making pertain to government structures, ideological and lobbying dictates, and cultural practices which influence the response of governing parties at the federal, state/provincial and local level, and to a lesser extent the leadership style of Prime Ministers and Premiers.

In the United States social policy reform is achieved largely through the legal system and the passage of legislation, whereas in Australia legislative advancement of social policy reform has been assisted by the establishment of a network of special offices, agencies and programs at all three levels of government (Sawer, 1994; Simms, 1994). As will be demonstrated in Chapter IV, agencies such as the Office of the Status of Women and the Women's Bureau of the then Department of Labour (now the Department of Employment, Education and Training) have been influential in promoting government assisted child-care in Australia. Initiatives for child-care policy action in Canada has, in contrast, come from a plurality of women's groups and day care associations lobbying government from outside, rather than from within, the political bureaucracy (Burt, 1988).

The women's movement, equally strong in Canada and in Australia throughout the 1970s and early 1980s was instrumental in getting child-care onto the political agenda (Sawer, 1990, 1994)⁶. 'The pattern emerged that the women's movement made most headway under Labor governments, either state or federal, and, while experiencing some setbacks when Liberal governments came in, was able to maintain and at times extend gains even under less sympathetic governments' (Curthoys, 1994:17). The success of Australian feminists in effecting change in public policies and in fostering bureaucratic innovation in general and with regard to child-care more specifically resulted from eight factors. First, the state in Australia was viewed as 'neutral' and 'benevolent', providing for all citizens without bias toward any one interest group.

⁵ Joan Eveline argues that the antagonism between conventional meanings of mothering and masculinity provides a 'powerful factor' in analysing approaches to child-care (1994:341).

⁶ Appendix B provides a summary of the influence on child-care policy of the women's policy machinery in Canada and Appendix C does the same for Australia.

Second, Australia had a political tradition that was favourable to interest group-government relations. Third, the emergence of the Women's Electoral Lobby (WEL) in 1972 gave rise to an energetic body of well-educated women which was 'remarkably successful in creating a new agenda for public policy and in giving its members confidence needed for entry into politics and other arenas of public life' (Sawer & Simms, 1993:135). Fourth, the election of the Whitlam Labor government demonstrated electoral advantages from women's policies (Sawer & Simms, 1993). Fifth, this led to bi-partisan support for women's rights. Sixth, the alliance between newer feminist organisations and 'traditional' women's groups promoted bi-partisan support. Seventh, there was a lack of effective anti-feminist opposition. Finally, the existence of a centralised wage-fixing system and a powerful, legitimate trade union movement supportive of feminist initiatives and of women's policy machinery aided Australian feminists in effecting change (Sawer & Simms, 1993).

The women's policy machinery in Canada, with both federal and provincial levels enjoying strong bi-partisan support, was unable to achieve similar gains⁷. Nonetheless, it managed to raise women's issues with consecutive governments and promoted the development, consolidation and monitoring of policies and programmes in areas such as child-care, parental and family leave, flexible work arrangements, part-time work and a gender neutral division of labour. The link between women's groups across the country evolved largely from a state-directed policy network in the 1960s, to a clientele relationship in the 1970s and pressure pluralist network in the 1980s (Vickers, Rankin & Appelle, 1993). It lost strength during the late 1980s and early 1990s as it became more diverse and fragmented and was weakened by economic rationalism and privatisation. It has thus become increasingly easy for Canadian governments to refuse to act on the grounds that the 'women's lobby' is divided, and to select policies corresponding with their own pre-set goals and values instead, 'comfortable with the knowledge that, within the new plurality of interests represented among the groups, they can find support for their actions' (Burt, 1988:209).

A climate of economic rationalism and privatisation has been evident within the federal government of Canada since the early 1980s. This form of conservatism has

⁷ See Sawer (1991, 1994) for a comparison of the achievements of the women's movement in Australia and Canada.

become more apparent in Australia with the election of a Liberal government after thirteen years of Labor controlling federal politics and policy making. Nevertheless, as will be demonstrated in the ensuing chapter, Labor policies pertaining to the care of children presented throughout the early 1990s were already exhibiting characteristics of an undercurrent of rationalisation and privatisation.

Summary

Comparing the Australian experience with that of Canada permits a deeper understanding of the distinctiveness and commonality of the Australian situation and provides a base for the ensuing discussion on policies pertaining to the care of children⁸. In terms of demographic change, Australia tends to follow international trends, 'tracing a moving average that stops somewhat short of extremes and is sedately lagging by a few years' (McNicoll, 1993:69). Canada is slightly ahead of Australia as far as the increase in women's labour force participation is concerned, though in many other respects such as demographic characteristics, the two countries are almost identical. Economic restructuring and globalisation have been a part of recent experiences in both countries. As will be shown in the Chapter IV, these trends have significantly influenced the level of government involvement in the care of children and the development of child-care in Australia and Canada during the past decade, especially in terms of funding levels and policy directions.

Indeed, the greatest difference between the two countries seems to have been political. The generally positive attitude toward federalism in Australia produced favourable conditions for a Labor government to recognise and pursue the economic benefits of increased publicly funded child-care provision. In contrast, the conservative government in office in Canada during the 1980s and early 1990s was more concerned with reducing the deficit than with improving existing or implementing new national social programs. The impact of these and other policy changes that have taken place during the past decade provides the focus for the next chapter. The extent to which governments in Canada and Australia have been involved in supporting various forms of child-care and the impact of policy changes on child-care arrangements in each of these two liberal welfare states are examined in the ensuing chapters.

⁸ See Appendix D for a comparison of social, political, economic and cultural characteristics between Australia and Canada.

CHAPTER IV

THE SHAPING AND RESHAPING OF CHILD-CARE POLICY IN AUSTRALIA AND CANADA

Introduction

Child-care in Australia and Canada has increasingly become a benefit for working parents as well as for the economic development of each society. The federal governments in both countries have, according to Alena Heitlinger, adopted a 'child parking' model of child-care which is 'associated with minimal standards and low quality of care, and with market emphasis on efficiency and the lowest cost per child care hour' (1993:260). While the provision of child-care services in Australia has expanded significantly under the co-ordination of the federal government, child-care in Australia continues to be non-systematic and without legislation that institutionalises the principles of equity, accessibility, affordability, and quality (Law Reform Commission, 1994; Wangmann, 1995). In contrast, child-care in Canada has witnessed minimal, if any, expansion of services and federal involvement over the last decade. Instead, the diverse array of child-care provision has increasingly become vulnerable to the effects of financial restraint and the piecemeal retrenchments sweeping the country and weakening the fabric of the Canadian welfare state.

Although Australia has the 1972 Child Care Act and a national strategy for child-care, the Commonwealth's funding process and the operations of the federally funded Children's Services Program have no legislative base. The Child Care Act covers funding for long day care centres only (see Appendix E) and federal funding is 'largely imposed administratively, through agreements, administrative guidelines and bulky handbooks' (Law Reform Commission, 1994:13). In Canada, child-care is covered by a range of provincial and federal legislation. Federal legislation has been part of the Canada Assistance Plan, until recently¹.

Pre-1900, formal child-care directed at poor and needy children was provided by philanthropic and religious organisations. Early in the twentieth century, philanthropy

¹ The Canada Assistance Plan (CAP) was rolled back into the Canada Health and Social Transfer (CHST), a single block fund as of April 1, 1996. See Chapter V for more details.

gave way to welfare and to the newly established kindergarten and day care movements, signifying the beginning of a long struggle between adherents of 'education' and advocates of 'day care'. World War II witnessed the involvement of the federal governments in child-care to assist mothers with preschool children to enter the labour force. This was short-lived. Bowlby's thesis on maternal deprivation gave credence to

the governments decision to retreat and ensured women's re-entry did not occur for at least a decade or more. It was not until the 1970s that child-care appeared on the political agenda again. This time it would stay there, gaining a good deal of attention throughout the 1980s².

This chapter focuses on the development of child-care policies and programs in Australia and Canada. Particular attention is paid to changes that occurred during the 1980s, to the factors that have been most influential in the shaping and reshaping of child-care policies and guidelines, and to aspects of government intervention considered important to the development of current child-care arrangements. The chapter commences by tracing the historical and cultural development of child-care from philanthropy to feminism in both Canada and Australia. Attempts to direct policy toward the establishment of a national child-care strategy are investigated and the reasons for Australia's apparent success and Canada's failure in this regard are examined. Patterns of child-care arrangements in each country prior to and after major policy changes are then reviewed to provide an indication of how government involvement in child-care can affect the lives of women, men and their children.

It is argued here that the late 1980s was perhaps the most crucial period in bringing about the differences in policy and child-care arrangements and organisation exhibited today in Canada and Australia. Although policy in the two countries diverges at this time, the historical development of child-care policy and provision reveals how and why the care of children has become more than a woman's issue and how, as an aspect of family and economic policy, the social construction of child-care has changed along with welfare state notions of motherhood and childhood.

² See Appendix F for a summary of the early 1980s federal day care policy issues in Australia and Canada.

From Philanthropy to a Political Issue

Issues important to a history of day care, or formal child-care, in Canada include the geographical vastness of the country, tensions between English and French settlers, opposition to the American Revolution and US perspectives on government, attempts by early Canadians to replicate certain institutions and social constructs brought from Europe, and the impact of urbanization and industrialization on family life and child-care (Goelman, 1992:226). With the exception of the influences of French settlers and the American Revolution, the history of day care in Australia looks very similar to that of Canada, at least up until the 1980s.

Up until the end of the 19th century education and welfare were considered primarily the concern of the church. In Canada, Jesuit (Quebec) and Anglican missionaries (Upper Canada) established schools during the 17th and 18th centuries. In Australia, the first school was conducted by a convict woman in 1789. Anglican missionaries began founding schools in the 1790s and were soon followed by the Catholics who began formal education in the colony in 1806. The colonial government became involved in the provision of education in Australia in 1848 in a dual system which incorporated both a Board of National Education, responsible for establishing government schools, and a Denominational School Board, appointed to administer government funds and operate church schools. Schools in Canada continued under the jurisdiction of the religious organisations throughout the American Revolution and beyond the drafting of the Canadian constitution in 1867³.

In addition to religious ideals and institutions, Europeans brought with them notions of childhood, motherhood and appropriate child rearing practices, some of which are still embedded in family and child-care policies of the twentieth century. The predominant social constructs were Anglo-Saxon and middle class, influenced by the works of theologians, social and political philosophers, and later by psychologists. Prior to the industrial revolution children were part of the economic family unit, cared for while their parents went about their work and helping as soon as they were physically able. They were treated as small adults (Aries, 1965).

³ The constitution, enacted in the British parliament as the British North America Act, is committed to 'peace, order and good government' (Goelman, 1992:227).

It has been argued that formal child-care programs appeared in Canada in the 1820s as a response to the increase in numbers of mothers who began work in the mills and other nascent industries in cities experiencing rapid urbanization and industrialization (Pence, 1988). The street urchins and poorest children of the working class were the target of these programs which were based on infant schools for the 'deprived' or 'disadvantaged' founded by Robert Owen in Lanark, Scotland and by Samuel Wilderspin in London, England. Educational inculturation was considered at the time to be a means of social engineering, a method for counteracting the increasing crime and delinquency of working class children.

After 1840 there was less of a demand for female labour in Canada. Many mothers returned to the home and were effectively kept there by the pervasive Victorian middle class family model which 'expected the father to work outside the home and the mother to assume primary responsibility for domestic and household responsibilities' (Goelman, 1992:228). By this time, childhood had increasingly become understood as a period of innocence, a time during which the irrational child required care and nurturance so that it would develop fully into a rational being⁴. Consequently, motherhood was increasingly and exclusively tied to these caring activities performed by women for their children in the privacy of the home⁵.

In Australia, the 'father-breadwinner/mother - carer' model was institutionalised by federal and state wage fixation tribunals. The principle of a 'family wage' was formally accepted as the basis for fixing a 'living' or 'basic wage' set by the 'Harvester

⁴ See Aries (1965) who provides an interesting account of the discovery of childhood, and DeMause (1974/82 cited in Jenks, 1982) who presents a periodisation of parent-child relations which relate to various forms of child-care. Infants are considered to become social beings through socialisation which involves the internalisation of social norms and values. The process of internalisation is viewed differently by different sociological traditions. For instance, Parsons considers that internalisation occurs through the differentiation of self from others while Mead focuses on the separation of the 'I' from the 'me' and Berger and Luckman refer to the development of identity and everyday knowledge through interaction.

⁵ The social construction of motherhood and its links to changing notions of childhood and child rearing practices has recently been the subject of research in Australia (Everingham, 1994), Great Britain (Ribbens, 1994), and the United States (Hays, 1996). These predominantly historical studies have demonstrated how male social and political philosophers such as Hobbs, Rousseau, and Locke, psychologists such as Freud, Piaget, Erikson, Watson and Bowlby, and sociologists such as Tonnies and Parsons have influenced the meaning of these important concepts, while other studies have shown how these social constructs have become embedded in various family and child-care policies (Leira, 1991) and how different models of motherhood have been politically and economically expedient (Cass, 1983; McCartney & Phillips, 1988; Leira, 1991; Sainsbury, 1995; Skocpol, 1990; Ribbens, 1994; Brush, 1996).

Judgment' in the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration at a level sufficient to meet the needs of an unskilled labourer, his wife and three dependent children (Cass, 1988). Since women were not legally responsible for maintaining a family, the female 'living' wage was typically set at 50-54 per cent of the male rate. Informal child-care was the only option when women were forced to seek employment.

During the latter half of the 19th century the major factors influencing child-care developments - the demands of the labour market, the influence of immigration, and the perceptions of family life - proved to be fluid (Goelman, 1992). In Canada at this time Protestant women established infant schools for working parents in Quebec City and Montreal, and Roman Catholic nuns established *crèches* for custodial care of working class children and *salles d'asiles* for educational care of working class and middle-class children. In Australia the kindergarten movement emerged during the last decade of the nineteenth century and was firmly based in the tradition of women's charitable work (Brennan, 1994). All day nurseries were funded almost exclusively by philanthropic or church - related organizations motivated by concern for the indigent and working class families. The day nurseries and *crèches* were run and staffed by middle- and upper-middle-class women attempting to meet the basic nutrition and health needs of the poor children. 'From the 1890s onwards women were breaking into the public sphere and were actively campaigning for a range of legal and social reforms' (Brennan, 1994:14).

The establishment of kindergartens, day nurseries and *crèches* occurred in the broader context of child welfare initiatives and educational reform which, in Canada developed in response to the massive emigration of 73000 children from England between 1896 and 1916. Australia also became the home for a number of 'Liverpool Orphans' and embraced the attitudes on the role of the family and the nature of childhood characteristic of a combination of 'Christian charity' and humanitarianism mixed in with large measures of pragmatism. The perspective on children became consistent with a 'Froebelian view' which became the basis for the kindergarten movement.

Froebel, a German educator, considered children to be like flowers who when nurtured would grow and unfold into decent adults thus eradicating behaviours which would prevent the social improvement of the poor (Cox, 1988; Goelman, 1992; Heitlinger,

1993, Brennan, 1994). Unlike his contemporaries who regarded children as 'ineducable' until the age of six or seven, Froebel advocated education for very young children (Brennan, 1994). In Germany and England kindergartens began as a service for the middle and upper classes: 'Froebel did not evince any particular concern about the education of *poor* [sic] children' (Brennan, 1994:14). The idea of free kindergartens came later.

Kindergartens were established in Sydney during the 1880s and in Toronto during the 1890s⁶. Fee-charging kindergartens for the children of wealthy families preceded free kindergartens, the first in Australia opening in Wolloomooloo in 1896. By 1899 there were Froebel Societies in Toronto, Ottawa, London and Winnipeg. In Australia kindergarten unions were founded in all Australian states and private training colleges had been set up (except for Tasmania) by 1911. The most enthusiastic supporters of the kindergarten movement were primarily interested in education as an instrument of social reform. Thus from 1880 to 1920 services for children developed in a number of crucial ways. First, the devoted and articulate group of social reformers who adopted the cause of child welfare raised the public's awareness and concern. Secondly, various child welfare professions expanded and began to replace the charitable upper middle-class women as staff in kindergarten and some day care centres. Finally, child welfare issues began to shift from being the concern of philanthropic organizations to government.

Between 1920 and 1940 the Australian and Canadian governments increasingly became involved in children's services in the context of social welfare and assistance to the poor. The Ontario government approved the Mother's Allowance Act in 1920 and in 1926 the Institute of Child Study was founded at the University of Toronto. This was a centre for training nursery school teachers who focused primarily on middle-class children and for sponsored day-care workers who cared mainly for the children of the working class and the poor. In Australia, small state government grants supplemented the non-profit pre-schools and day nurseries until the late 1930s. In 1938 the commonwealth Department of Health announced a plan to establish demonstration 'child study centres' in each state capital city. The Lady Gowrie Child

⁶ See Appendix G for a list of foundation dates for Kindergartens, Day Care Centres, Crèches and training colleges for kindergarten and day care teachers in Australia and Canada.

Centres were opened in 1940 under the auspices of the newly-formed Australian Association for Pre-School Child Development to improve the health of working class children (Brennan, 1994).

Three years after the Lady Gowrie Child Centres were opened the commonwealth government became involved in children's services as a result of concern about the care of children whose mothers were involved in the national war effort (Brennan, 1994). Similar to the Dominion-Provincial War Time Agreement in Canada, the Australian government took measures to facilitate women's participation in the labour force. These wartime childcare programs were short-term. Following the war both federal governments withdrew their funding and the centres were closed. Brennan argues that the wartime programs, like the Lady Gowrie Child Centres, were justified by notions of 'national interest' and were devised in such a way that each was considered a very circumscribed event⁷ (Brennan, 1994).

The dominant postwar view was that women were no longer needed in the work force so there was no need for publicly funded childcare services. Instead, the governments developed different forms of family and social support. For instance, the Australian commonwealth government introduced a universal, non-income tested child endowment in 1941 (Heitlinger, 1993). Soon after, in 1944, the federal government in Canada passed the Family Allowances Act, which in effect was a universal 'baby bonus' providing cash benefits payable to all mothers of children under 16 years of age. The 1950s was also influenced by the work of John Bowlby on the maternal deprivation suffered by war orphans, by psychoanalytically oriented theories stressing the importance of maternal attachment, and by societal views discouraging mothers of young children from entering the work force (Goelman, 1992; Brennan, 1994; Singer 1992; Hays, 1996). As Lee Comer has argued,

[T]he most effective way of saving the State's money, of keeping children at home with mothers until they are five, is to emphasize over and over again the exclusivity and significance of the mother/child relationship. We are bombarded with this stuff from every corner and no woman is immune to it. From Bowlby to 'Woman's Own', it is everyone's prerogative to state with absolute certainty that a child needs its mother, and, deprived of her constant and exclusive care and attention, the child will

⁷ Deborah Brennan (1994) provides an informative account of the development of the Lady Gowrie Child Centres and of the 'wartime children's centres' program in Chapter 2 of her historical work on the politics of childcare in Australia.

suffer unmentionable difficulties and will probably turn out to be a delinquent. Dr John Bowlby is the arch perpetrator of this.⁸ (1975:195)

Moreover, as Alena Heitlinger has noted:

The ideology of maternal deprivation was extremely influential in determining the major thrust of post-war childcare policies, which had discouraged provision of day-care places except for children with special needs. Public debates about childcare services focused only on the needs of children ... The mother-child relationship was synonymous with 'family life'. (1993:222)

The social and political stability of the 1950s continued into the 1960s, for the most part, despite a steady increase in married women's workforce participation and a growing awareness of the need for day care. In Canada, this period witnessed a number of events which helped put child-care on the political agenda at the beginning of the 1970s: the number of day-care centres doubled, the Welfare Institutions Licensing Board in British Columbia was created to monitor the quality of day care and nursery schools in Vancouver, the Association of Cooperative Play Groups in Greater Vancouver and the British Columbia Preschool Education Association were founded, a syllabus was formulated and training courses began at the University of British Columbia in 1955, and the Canada Assistance Plan (CAP) devised as a cost-sharing mechanism that could be used by provinces to access federal funds to assist low-income families in paying for child-care expenses was implemented⁹ (Goelman, 1992). The Canada Assistance Plan (CAP) embodies childcare as welfare for disadvantaged families in federal legislation. Although funding a public childcare system was not CAP's major objective, 'most public day-care services in Canada are, in fact, funded through it' (Heitlinger, 1993:225). The CAP initially produced a spurt in subsidised spaces and provincial expenditure: between 1966 to 1974 subsidised spaces in Ontario increased from 2025 to 12152.

In Australia pre-school education received unprecedented attention throughout the 1960s and was incorporated into the state Education Department and provided as part of primary education as a result of an inquiry into education for children aged three to eight years undertaken in Tasmania in 1964. The increasing need for childcare did not

⁸ Comer goes on to present extracts from Bowlby's published articles and present evidence to support her claim that Bowlby had a long lasting and powerful influence on lay and professional people.

⁹ Since 1990 the federal government unilaterally limited the growth of Ottawa's contribution to Ontario, Alberta and British Columbia to 5%.

translate even into limited action by the government to encourage and subsidise the provision of services until employers began to complain of a shortage of female labour as the post-war economic boom reached its peak in the late 1960s (Brennan, 1994). Most women appeared to have managed before this by calling on their informal social networks (e.g., friends, neighbours and members of their extended families) to provide help.

The 1970s increasingly saw child-care on the political agenda in both countries. In 1970, the Royal Commission on the Status of Women in Canada reported that the economic base of families was shifting and childcare was predicted to be a major and growing issue (Goelman, 1992:233). In effect the Royal Commission put a publicly funded childcare system on the political agenda. This was developed by the National Action Committee on the Status of Women (NACSW) which included state provision of universal non-profit day-care on its initial policy action list. Unfortunately, Status of Women Canada offered no leadership and childcare was excluded from the National Plan of Action put forward by Canada and adopted at the 1975 United Nations World Conference for Women in Mexico City (Burt, 1990:207). In 1971 the Canadian Council on Social Development and the National Department of Health and Welfare convened the first National Childcare Conference in Winnipeg which recommended the establishment of the National Day Care Information Office within Health and Welfare Canada (HWC). The same year Saskatchewan enacted its first childcare act and the government in Ontario instituted a plan to offer capital grants to day-care services and amended child-care legislation. In 1972 the newly elected New Democratic Party in British Columbia promised to extend and enhance child day-care services and throughout the remainder of the decade day care training programs were developed and implemented at most community colleges across the country with advanced or 'post-basis' training made available: the first bachelors degree in childcare was offered in the School of Childcare (now School of Child and Youth Care) at the University of Victoria in 1976. Demand for childcare, however, continued to outstrip provision of licensed spaces. This imbalance, according to Goelman occurred because:

the governmental system of supporting childcare was trapped in its early conceptual welfare framework that was no longer appropriate for the dramatic demographic and social developments in society. As the 1980s dawned, all levels of government began to grapple with the serious and growing demand for quality childcare services. (1992: 234-235)

A significant difference between Australian and Canadian child-care policy during the 1970s was the establishment of the Foreign Domestic Movement Program in Canada. Although this program was devised to bring in workers from abroad, primarily the Third World, on temporary work permits to perform domestic duties, the vast majority worked as nannies as well. Since the mid 1970s the Department of Employment and Immigration has admitted 10,000 to 16,000 workers per year (96% as live-in domestics). The program allows Philipinos and Caribbean women, otherwise ineligible, to enter the country for two years of continuous domestic work which qualifies them to apply for residency. This has created class and race hostilities as working class women witness foreign domestic workers taking employment with high income women who want to avoid confrontation with their husbands over sharing child-care and domestic work (Landsberg, 1991). The foreign domestic workers are thus caught in a jurisdictional conflict between the 'care' and 'education' of young children in which the 'care' component is devalued. Although a cheap and convenient way to provide child-care and domestic labour the situation of foreign domestic workers remains a bone of contention¹⁰.

In Australia, child-care entered the political discourse when Prime Minister John Gorton promised to establish some form of public childcare for children for working parents during the 1970 Senate election campaign. The plans for the 'Gortongardens' or 'pre-school cum childminding centres' was shelved in May 1971 due to economic restraint. Nonetheless, in 1972, the McMahon Liberal-Country Party government passed the Child Care Act. The government did so reluctantly only as a response to employers's demands for female labour. Child-care was considered then as a means for reducing absenteeism and for improving women worker's morale and productivity (Cox, 1983; Brennan & O'Donnell 1986:22-3). However, before any of the \$5million funding for the Act was disbursed the Liberal-Country Party lost office. The Whitlam Labor government which replaced it was strongly committed to social reform and

¹⁰ In 1991 the federal government allowed more than 7000 foreign domestic workers to enter Canada under the Live-In-Caregiver Program despite record unemployment. The domestics earn minimum wage or roughly \$12,480 per year from which deductions are made for room and board by their employers with whom they live. Some employers take advantage of their domestics by making them work overtime without pay and by keeping them ignorant about their work arrangements covered by government legislation i.e., that they are protected by provincial employment laws, health care insurance, Workers' Compensation, and human rights statutes (Murdock, 1992).

proposed 'compensatory' pre-school education as an instrument of social change. The Prime Minister believed that child-care was 'the most important single weapon in promoting equality and in overcoming social, economic and language inequalities' and that 'a woman's choice between making motherhood her sole career and following another career in conjunction with motherhood depends upon the availability of proper childcare facilities' (Whitlam's policy speech quoted in Brennan and O'Donnell, 1986:24).

The Labor politicians did not seem to perceive the difference between 'education' and 'care' when explaining their policy. This, according to Sara Dowse (1988) led to confusion which impeded the development and implementation of the policy and added to the long standing split between the two lobby groups and their philosophies. The kindergarten movement advocated education which was generally accepted as a public responsibility and assumed that the child is a citizen in her or his own right. The purpose of child-care advocated by the day care movement was instead to enable mothers (parents) to participate in the labour force. The underlying assumption here, that the child belongs to the parent, is easily translated into a private responsibility. Governments have tended to be reluctant to become involved in issues concerning private responsibilities.

Figure 4.1: 'Care' Versus 'Education' Approaches To Child-Care Services.

CHARACTERISTIC	'CARE'	'EDUCATION'
program type	Day-care; family day care	Kindergarten; preschool
funding	parental fees	state funded
staff qualifications	2 year diploma in early childhood education from a community college	university trained teachers better equipped to teach school-aged children
staff - child ratio	typically 1:8	1:20
other functions	may also provide educational	rarely are the custodial needs of children taken into account
duration of care	variable hours	most only offer half-day programmes
staff payment	lower pay	higher pay determined by credentials & union power

Sources: Ferguson (1990); Heitlinger (1993: 222-223); Brennan (1994).

The differences between the 'care' and the 'education' approaches to child-care are listed in Figure 4.1. 'Care' based services, such as long day care and family day care, are funded primarily by parental fees whereas kindergartens and preschool,

educational services which prepare children for school, are mostly funded by the state. Staff working in long day care centres and family day care tend to have lower levels of pay and of qualifications than preschool and kindergarten teachers. While 'care' based facilities operate variable hours and may also provide educational programs, kindergarten and preschool tend to offer mostly half day programs and rarely meet the custodial needs of the children.

The differing values attached to care for children have reinforced the competition between child-care settings and their supporters. The mutually hostile, resentful and feuding advocacy groups have tended to undermine efforts to develop integrated rather than fragmented childcare provision and to put under funding and undervaluing of all child-care labour on the political agenda (Ferguson, 1991: 83-4). This is paralleled by jurisdictional fragmentation between social services and education which are expanding services for essentially the same target group of young children (Cox, 1983).

Efforts Toward the Development of a National Child-Care System¹¹

Efforts toward the development of a national child-care system in Australia and Canada began during the 1970s and continued in earnest throughout the 1980s. In 1988 the Australian government announced the implementation of a National Child Care Strategy, which was, in part a continuation of a previously made commitment to the expansion of children's services in Australia. The same year, the proposed ^{CANADIAN} National Strategy on Child Care, intended as a centrepiece of the Conservative government's social policy agenda, proved 'so regressive as to be irredeemable' by the child-care advocacy community that they rallied to successfully scuttle its implementation and the passage of its supporting legislation (Bill C-144). The women's policy machinery in Australia was instrumental in effecting change in policies and in fostering bureaucratic innovation. In Canada, the women's policy machinery enjoyed strong bi-partisan support within both federal and provincial levels and yet was unable to achieve similar results. The following two sections trace the developments leading up to and including the implementation of a National Child Care Strategy in

¹¹ In Canada, the proposed policy for the development of a nationally coordinated child-care system was known as the National Strategy on Child Care.

Australia and the abandonment of the National Strategy for Child Care in Canada. In doing so an attempt is made to highlight particular aspects of the different approaches and the subsequent outcomes to establish a national child-care program in each country, which were most influential and which may prove significant in recent and future child-care developments.

Australia

Two successive reports on services for young children were produced by the Whitlam government, each with different ideas about the direction the policies should take. The first, *Care and Education of Young Children* prepared by the Australian Pre-Schools Committee¹², emphasised professionalisation and recommended 3 half day sessions of pre-school per week to be provided for 70% of all 4 year olds¹³. It was opposed both inside and outside of the state bureaucracy. The second report, *Project Care*¹⁴ recommended that the Commonwealth government sponsor a mixture of locally chosen early childhood services such as pre-school, day care, play groups, babysitting clubs, and support services for private childminders, emphasising the need for parental and community participation in planning and providing services and funding via capital and operating grants distributed in favour of the needy (Brennan & O'Donnell, 1986:31-2). The report was supported and endorsed for the most part and \$75 million was eventually allocated to the program in the 1974-5 budget. An Interim Committee for the Children's Commission (ICCC)¹⁵ was established to develop and administer the program on a submission-based model of funding (Dowse, 1988:211). The devolutionary mode of funding however, greatly disadvantaged those who lacked the skills and resources to write complex submissions for funding. In fact, the submission process advantaged the pre-school education organisations and state education departments who had the skills, resources, and access to and representation on state-

¹² This report, also called the Fry Report named after the chairperson Joan Fry, was released in November 1973.

¹³ The report was challenged both inside and outside of the state bureaucracy but most effectively by Whitlam's personal adviser on women's affairs, Elizabeth Reid. Reid indicated that the report was 'biased in its approach, 'insensitive in its analysis', and 'unimaginative in its solutions' (Brennan & O'Donnell, 1986:28) and persuaded the cabinet to refer the report 'to the Social Welfare Commission and the Priorities Review Staff before committing itself to the policies the Pre-Schools Committee recommended' (Dowse, 1988:211).

¹⁴ *Project Care* was prepared by the Social Welfare Commission and released in 1974.

¹⁵ The ICCC was responsible to the Prime Minister's women's adviser and the Women's Affairs Section.

level committees.

The period for 1975 to 1983 was less favourable to state institutionalised child-care. Besides an economic recession, financial stringencies, rising unemployment and inflation, the return to power of the Liberal-National Country Party meant cuts in public expenditure, especially in social wage areas and the devolution of financial responsibility to other levels of government. In all but the last of Fraser's seven budgets children's services funding was cut in real (inflationary-adjusted) terms to a total of 30% of that of the peak period during the Whitlam government (Brennan & O'Donnell, 1986:39). The Fraser government abolished the Interim Children's Commission and reassigned its responsibility to the Department of Social Security (Office of Childcare). Education and care services were formally split and pre-school funding was devoluted to the states. This signaled a philosophical shift towards the welfare model of child-care¹⁶. The logic of welfare child-care is that it is less expensive for the state to pay the child-care costs of the low-income working parent than it is to pay the full cost of subsistence. It is also ideologically supportive of the work ethic, emphasising a way of ending welfare dependency.

Despite cutting back on child-care support, the Fraser government did manage to allocate two thirds of the children's services budget to non- pre-school child-care (Brennan, 1994). A significant amount of this funding went to family day care. For instance between 1976 and 1981, 10,000 family day care places were established in contrast to 1,500 centre-based places. 'Family day care was preferred for its alleged cost-effectiveness, flexibility, the ease and speed with which it could be established, and compatibility with the conservative ideologies of the family and of mothercare' (Brennan & O'Donnell, 1986:46). A similar shift occurred in Canada about the same time¹⁷ (Heitlinger, 1993).

¹⁶ According to Eva Cox the conservative shift to a welfare model of child-care 'was actually closer to women's needs than the unclear priorities of the previous reformist government' (1988:203). The category of children classified as being in 'need' was very broad including children with sick or incapacitated parents, handicapped children, children at risk and maltreated, indigenous and migrant children, as well as children from low-income families, especially single-parent families, and children from families with both parents in the workforce (Heitlinger, 1993: 245).

¹⁷ With the move to licensing agencies and to the setting of standards and wages costs for family day care in Canada have increased (Ferguson, 1991).

The Fraser government conducted two reviews: the 1979 Programme Effectiveness Review and the 1981 Spender Review, then introduced new fee arrangements, standardised income testing, and a pilot project offering subsidies to users of commercial day-care centres as recommended. According to Heitlinger, the recommendations in Australia

to substantially increase parental fees and to provide demand subsidies for users of commercial day-care centres aroused particularly strong opposition and became the focus for vigorous political activity. ... As in Canada, it was pointed out that the profit motive was incompatible with the provision of high quality services; that standards and industrial conditions in many private centres were appalling, with many young girls being employed and then dismissed when they became eligible for adult wages; that there was no parental involvement; and that it would simply transfer resources from the public to the private sector without increasing the number of children with access to subsidised care. (1993: 246)

The Hawke government put an end to the Fraser government initiatives. The Labor government was committed instead to childcare as a *right* for all families (Brennan & O'Donnell, 1986:54) and to the Prices and Incomes Accord agreement with the trade unions which meant wage restraint in return for restraint on prices and non-wage income, modest tax reform and a gradual increase in the social wage (Heitlinger, 1993). The Hawke government provided \$10 million in the 1983-4 budget for new services and made \$30 million available the following year, effectively increasing the number of child-care spaces by almost 60 per cent in two years. New funding arrangements were introduced for Commonwealth-sponsored services, increasing the number of families eligible for reduced fees. A planning approach involving committees in each state and territory advising on priorities replaced the submission model. This attracted significant contributions from other levels of government including \$14 million, 140 blocks of land and a number of buildings (Brennan & O'Donnell, 1986: 54-5).

In 1984, child-care became an election campaign priority. The government promised 20,000 new spaces (\$100 million) by June 1988¹⁸. The Office of Childcare was also relocated to a newly established Department of Community Services which in effect promoted a more positive image of childcare as a social service (Brennan & O'Donnell,

¹⁸ Sawyer suggests that this was a great victory for the Office of the Status of Women and its Head, Anne Summers (1990:80).

1986:55). However, in 1985 the rapid progress that was being made by the Hawke government was brought to a standstill when the mini-budget brought massive cuts to children's services. These cutbacks were accompanied by significant restructuring in the funding formula effectively shifting supply-side subsidies to demand-side subsidies thus creating an approximate 50 per cent increase in maximum fees, a higher proportion of users being eligible for fee relief, and an emphasis on cost containment (Cox, 1988). The Hawke government moved away from universal access toward selective allocation. By 1986 selective subsidies were introduced favouring parents who were employed, training, or seeking work, and children with disabilities or at risk.

This shift away from the welfare model stimulated a good deal of debate. It was considered by some to be negative in class terms, exchanging priority of access for working parents to state supported childcare which resulted in child-care becoming part of the social wage for middle-class families (Heitlinger, 1993). A year later the rationale for the child-care program was thrown into question when the Finance Minister Peter Walsh suggested that state-supported child-care was too expensive, inefficient and biased in favour of the wealthy (Cox, 1983; Brennan, 1994). The debate was opened again when a report prepared by scholars of the respected Centre for Economic Policy Research at the Australian National University was released in 1988 demonstrating that \$200 million expended on childcare by the government would create \$300 million in extra tax revenue, savings on social security payments and skills maintenance, plus a return on human capital investment. According to Sawer this report proved 'invaluable to femocrats and to women's organisations, because this time familiar feminist arguments were being put by some senior male economists' (1990:82-3).

A discussion paper on child-care policy, highlighting the economic benefits of public provision and recommending that the government embark on a ten year expansion plan that would achieve 80 per cent of work-related needs for child-care by 1998 prepared by the Australian Council of Social Service (ACOSS) was also issued in 1988. The paper presenting the argument that child-care services make a considerable contribution to the capacity of families to remain economically independent was supported by the Women's Electoral Lobby, the National Association of Community Based Childcare and the Australian Early Childhood Association

(Brennan, 1994). The Hawke Labor Government was also pressured by the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU) responding with the devising and implementation of the 1988 National Child Care Strategy. In effect this meant a further commitment to expand child-care services with the allocation of funding in the 1988-9 budget for 30,000 new spaces over 4 years: 20,000 earmarked for outside school hours; 4000 family day care; 400 day care; 2,000 occasional care; 1,000 for employer-supported childcare (Heitlinger, 1993:249; Wangmann, 1995:38). The National Child Care Strategy also included the employer-supported programme, a government initiative to create an incentive for private sector employers with a high proportion of low-income earners requiring child-care to establish workplace services. Capital facilities (licensable day care centres located on a ground floor with outside playground and an open green space) including equipment were to be provided by employers, operating costs were to be shared between users, the federal government (in the form of fee relief for low income earners) and employers (Heitlinger, 1993). The pilot scheme for workplace child-care was set up grudgingly, primarily because the ACTU and the Women's Bureau of the Department of Employment, Education and Training regarded the guidelines as unnecessarily rigid¹⁹.

The commitment made in the National Child Care Strategy was further extended in 1990 when the Hawke Labor government was forced to match and better the Liberal Party's election campaign policy known as the Economic Action Plan (EAP) in order to secure women's votes (Cox, 1993; Cockburn, 1991). The EAP, released in October 1989, promised income related spouse rebates, child tax rebates, plus child-care rebates at \$820 million, the equivalent of up to \$20 per week for children under 5 years of age and \$10 per week for school aged children. Pushed by the ACTU, the government also began supporting working parents using private or higher cost non-profit day care by promising \$400 million over 3 years of supply and demand subsidies

¹⁹ According to Heitlinger (1993), the ACTU has had a progressive policy on childcare since its adoption of the Working Women's Charter in 1977. At the 1983 Congress, the ACTU endorsed the view that children's services are a central trade union concern. An explicit Child Care and Children's Services Policy was adopted at the 1987 ACTU Congress. Following the parental leave test case victory, the ACTU made work-based childcare one of its top priorities. Employer-sponsored childcare in Australia tends not to be employer controlled, because as a condition of Commonwealth funding, the centre has to be operated by a non-profit incorporated body. The ACTU favours the use of an incorporated management committee to operate the employer-supported childcare centre as a means of reducing the inevitable conflict between the employer's profit motive and the best interests of children (Heitlinger, 1993:251).

equivalent to 78,000 new spaces, increasing fee relief ceilings and the eligible income threshold, and extended means-tested fee relief to private users. Half of the 78,000 places were proposed on a cost share basis with the states and 28,000 additional places were expected to be employer-provided and commercial centre created. A special system of accreditation to ensure quality services was also provided (Heitlinger, 1993). A similar move was made by the Labor Government during the 1993 election²⁰ when a further commitment was made to provide '20,000 places in the community-based sector and, by 1996-97, approximately 30,000 in the employer and private sectors' (Wangmann, 1995:38). However, as Judy Wangmann has argued

It is significant to note that during this decade of expansion, a shift has occurred in both service type and auspice. This shift has resulted from a push from within Government ranks, led by the economic rationalists, for reduced program costs and hence reduced Government expenditure in child care. (1995:38)

Canada

Child-care was also a key political topic in Canada during the 1980s. The beginning of the 1980s saw the acknowledgment of child-care as an issue; the middle saw governments collect information and undertake reviews; and the closing saw governments present initial proposals for change (Goelman, 1992). In 1982 the Second National Day Care Conference was held in Winnipeg. It was funded by the federal government and acted as a catalyst for professionals to form political lobby groups that could organize and focus their energies into advocacy work on a national rather than provincial level. The Canadian Day Care Advocacy Association (CDCAA) and the professional organisation Canadian Child Day Care Federation (CCDCF) were founded at the conference to educate the public, lobby the government and provide support in the provinces and territories. In 1983 the National Day Care Research Network (NDCRN) was founded at a conference funded by the National Department of Health and Welfare and the University of British Columbia. NDCRN was established to articulate research agendas, to meet periodically providing an information and discussion forum, and to publish occasional newsletters and facilitate collaborative cross-province research. The latter objective was achieved in 1988. By 1984 all parties began to make a reform issue of child-care for their election campaigns.

²⁰ Discussed in the following chapter.

Governments were also forced to demonstrate a willingness to sponsor commissions and task forces to study the topic: they have been more receptive to demands for a commodified service presented in the familiar and non-challenging language of liberal social policy promoting 'equal opportunities' or 'parental choice' than for demands for a non-sexist, transformative, community-based system befitting of the original feminist vision. Needless to say the political rhetoric throughout the 1980s was much bolder than actual funding and service delivery mechanisms, which have retained their earlier welfare orientation (Heitlinger, 1993:235-6).

The first commission to report on child-care was the Royal Commission on Equality in Employment, chaired by Judge Rosaline Abella (Abella, 1984). The report stressed the urgent need for action on childcare reiterating the same point made by the Royal Commission on the Status of Women in 1970 that '[t]he time is past when society can refuse to provide community child-care services in the hope of dissuading mothers from leaving their children and going to work' (1970:263 quoted in Abella, 1984:3). Mothers with children under 16 who participated in the workforce had increased from 20 per cent in 1970 to 59 per cent in 1984 when the Abella report was released. In response to the Abella report the Liberal government commissioned a Task Force on Childcare to provide the first comprehensive study of the issue. The Task Force, headed by sociologist Dr. Katie Cooke commissioned numerous studies and reported in 1988 recommending that 'the federal, provincial and territorial governments jointly develop complementary systems of childcare and parental leave that are as comprehensive, accessible and competent as our systems of health care and education' (1986:373). Further, it was recommended that the government spend up to \$11 billion by the year 2001 to make day care free and universally accessible. Again it was noted that that the need for publicly funded childcare was urgent (Cooke, 1986:343). This was endorsed by most advocates and represented a major shift in thinking on day care breaking from the welfare framework and encouraging federal government involvement.

The Liberal government was defeated before the Cooke report was completed and the recommendations were presented to a less than favourable government with no obligation to respond or implement any of the recommendations. Under pressure, the government appointed a Special Parliamentary Committee on Childcare (SPCC) to

tour the country, study the recommendations and look for a solution within its terms of market and fiscal restraint philosophy. The Special Committee released its report in March 1987. This time the federal minister for Health and Welfare was obliged to respond. The SPCC recommended that the federal government

assume its *share of responsibility* [sic] for childcare by supporting, where possible, the roles of parent, employers, provincial and territorial governments and childcare providers by using its taxing power (Martin, 1987, p9). The other five recommendations are phrased as 'supporting and encouraging' either parents, other levels of government or other parties to assume their own 'share' of the responsibility for child-care. (Goelman, 1992:239)

There was no endorsement for the creation of a national child-care system. Many thought the report was not worthy of adoption and the report was only endorsed by conservative members of the committee - the others issued minority dissenting reports. No longer was there consensus on government support for family life and the care of children.

In 1987 the Mulroney Conservative government delivered its proposal for a National Strategy on Childcare. The National Strategy, devised to replace CAP funding, allocated funding over seven years to the value of \$6.4 billion: \$2.3 billion was earmarked for Child Care Expense Deductions and a tax credit of \$200 a year for stay-at-home mothers and working parents without receipts for child-care services rendered to allow parental choice; \$100 million was to be spent on special projects to assist with the construction of new non-profit day care centres and the operating costs of non-profit and commercial day care centres; and the remaining \$3 billion for joint provincial expenditures to create 200,000 new child-care spaces. The Strategy was not all that was hoped for: no restrictions were placed on the ownership of child-care facilities; it fell short of providing the estimated 750,000 spaces needed; it did not have any direct policy principles; it did not specify minimum national standards for child-care that the provinces would have to accept as a condition of federal funding; nor did it outline general areas for provinces to set their own standards (Burt, 1988; Teghtsoonian, 1993, 1996). Although Health and Welfare Canada participated in the drafting, the basic design for the proposed Canada Childcare Bill C-144 was devised by the Department of Finance. Legislation was tabled in 1988, passed by the House of Commons but rejected by the Senate five days prior to the 1989 elections. Bill C-144 died on the table. The new Mulroney government then postponed the reintroduction of the Bill claiming financial pressures insurmountable. It was no secret that many Tory

MPs were glad Bill C-144 died:

As far as they were concerned, subsidized day care was an unwelcome concession to the feminist lobby. They had agreed to create 200 000 non-profit child-care spaces, only when the government promised to enrich the tax breaks for families with a stay-at-home parent. The collapse of the Childcare Act gave them what they wanted; the tax breaks went ahead, but the expansion of child-care facilities did not. (Heitlinger, 1993:237)

Moreover, as Kathy Teghtsoonian has argued, much of the opposition to Bill C-144 was against a strong regulatory role for the federal government reflecting and constituting neo-conservative ideological positions which were institution-, market- and family-oriented²¹ (1993:109). Although the re-elected Mulroney government repeatedly promised to create 400,000 new spaces and reintroduce the legislation, neither materialized.

The window of opportunity for the establishment of a national child-care program in Canada was short-lived. With the re-election of the Mulroney government came a shift in focus away from the needs of children and families toward the reduction in the government deficit and national debt. Economic rationalism swept the country and with it came cuts to social spending at both the federal and provincial level. Despite promises made at both the 1989 and 1993 federal elections to fund more child-care spaces, the situation of child-care in Canada has improved little, if at all, during the past decade.

Dependent upon the ideological and economic position and subsequent involvement of provincial governments, access to formal child-care places across Canada has become increasingly more varied and limited. For instance, in 1992, only Quebec and Ontario had any publicly-operated regulated centre-based spaces, and the proportion of not-for-profit spaces (including non-profit and publicly operated centres) ranged from 22 percent in Newfoundland and Labrador to 94 per cent in Saskatchewan, with a national average of 70 per cent (CRRU, 1993). Indeed, the proportion of children 0-12 years of age for whom there was a regulated child-care space in 1992 was only 7.5 per cent on average, being as low as 3.1 per cent in Saskatchewan and as high as 16.7 per

²¹ The distinction between institution-, market- and family-oriented neo-conservative positions rest on the particular kind of negative consequences linked with a centralised approach to regulating child-care services, or the positive virtues associated with assigning regulatory authority for child-care to the provinces. For more detail refer to Teghtsoonian's paper on *Neo-conservative ideology and opposition to federal regulation of child care services in the United States and Canada* (1993).

cent in the Yukon²². In Australia, the percentage of children using formal care was 18 per cent in 1990 with no major differences across States and Territories except in the ACT where formal care usage was 28 per cent²³. The majority of children in Canada, as in Australia, have been and continue to be cared for on an informal basis by relatives, neighbours and friends when not in the care of a parent.

Changing Child-Care Arrangements

In this section, two levels of investigation are used to gain a picture of changes in patterns of child-care arrangements in Australia and Canada. First, child-care arrangements are examined at a macro level. That is, the change in number of children of different age groups using various types of child-care arrangements are examined. This permits an understanding of the mix of child-care arrangements used in both countries and provides an indication of the level of government involvement in the provision of child-care services. Second, the child-care participation rates and amount of time spent by Canadian and Australian men and women on child-care activities are analysed. This data offers a gender sensitive measure of the cost of child-care on parental time use and an investigation of the influence of child-care policies on gender equality and on child-care arrangements in the home in both liberal welfare states.

Macro Measures of Child-Care and Related Policy

Child-care arrangements vary by type, by country and across states and provinces. In this section data presented for Australia is taken from the Australian Bureau of Statistics' National Child Care Survey series. This data on the supply of, and demand for, child-care for children aged less than 12 years, and on the interaction of child-care with work and family responsibilities, has been collected every three to four years, since 1969. Although there is no comparable survey series undertaken in Canada, Health and Welfare Canada has reported yearly since 1971 on the status of day care and has published reports from the Canadian National Child Care Study which it helped fund in 1988. More recently, The Childcare Resource and Research Unit of the

²² See Appendix H for a comparison of regulated child-care spaces in Canada by province and territory.

²³ See Appendix I for a comparison by state and territory of the availability of formal child-care spaces in Australia.

University of Toronto has collected and compiled data from the provinces and territories.

Figure 4.2 defines the different kinds of formal and informal child-care arrangements. Child-care arrangements are defined, for the most part, similarly by all of the data sources. The Canadian National Child Care Study, however, refers to care provided by specific child-care programs and caregivers for a child younger than 13 years of age, while the Australian survey series refers to formal and informal care of children under 12 years of age. Formal child-care or regulated care performed away from the child's home, includes preschool, before and after school hours care, long day care centres, family day care, occasional care, and other formal care (i.e., adjunct care). Informal care or non-regulated care, which may be paid or unpaid and carried out in either the child's home or elsewhere, includes care by siblings, i.e., (step) brothers or sisters, care by relatives (including non-custodial parent), and by non-relatives such as friends, neighbours or baby-sitters.

Figure 4.2: Formal and Informal Child-Care Arrangements Defined

FORMAL CHILD-CARE ARRANGEMENTS

Before and After School Care: care available to school-aged children before and after school as well as during school vacations provided by schools, community-based or Family Day Care services. Services primarily provide recreational activities. Also known as Outside School Hours Care.

Family Day Care: care offered in private homes by registered carers, available for a full day to children 0-12 years. Administered by local government and community-based agencies, it operates for at least eight hours per day, five days a week, and for 48 or more weeks each year. This scheme also provides emergency and special, or occasional, care.

Long Day Care Centre: regulated, centre-based care which is available to children between birth and school age for the full day provided by commercial, community or government centres which operate for at least eight hours per day, five days a week, and for 48 weeks or more.

Occasional Care: regulated care, which is generally available for children ages 0-12 years for short periods of time to allow parents to shop, attend appointments, or to take brief breaks from parenting. Care can be regular or irregular but must be community-based to receive Commonwealth funding.

Preschool: care generally available in school hours during school terms for children from 3 years of age up to the school starting age (5 years). Children usually have fixed attendance times. Half-day sessions (2-3 hours) are most common. Also known as kindergarten in some States.

INFORMAL CHILD-CARE ARRANGEMENTS

Non-relative Care: care by people who are not related to the child, e.g., a neighbour or friend.

Other Relative Care: care by relatives of the child excluding (step) brothers and sisters.

Parent: the natural, adopted or step mother/ father of the child; or the female/male legal guardian of the child; or the spouse or de facto partner of the mother/ father.

Sibling Care: care by the child's brothers or sisters, including step brothers or sisters.

Self Care: child-cares for his/her self in the absence of parents and others.

Sources: ABS (1994b, 1997b); AIFS (1993, 1997); Wangmann (1995).

Table 4.1: Type of Care by Age of Child in Australia 1987 & 1993.

TYPE OF CARE ARRANGEMENT	NUMBER OF CHILDREN ('000)							
	0 - 2 Years		3 - 5 Years		6 - 11 Years		0 - 11 Years	
	1987	1993	1987	1993	1987	1993	1987	1993
<i>Formal Care</i>								
Pre-school	0.1	1.9	236.1	235.0	0.3		236.5	236.9
Family Day Care	21.4	34.2	12.3	32.4	9.4	14.1	43.1	80.7
Long Day Care	51.9	61.5	67.7	82.1	22.8	3.1	142.4	146.7
Before/After School Care	-			11.3		74.6		85.8
Occasional Care		21.9		24.4		3.7		50.0
Other Formal Care	4.3	16.1	7.2	12.9	9.4	1.0	12.9	30.0
<i>Formal Care Only</i>	<i>48.2</i>	<i>77.5</i>	<i>196.8</i>	<i>168.3</i>	<i>19.0</i>	<i>55.1</i>	<i>264.0</i>	<i>338.7</i>
Total Formal Care*	80.0	134.5	341.3	368.9	34.0	92.8	455.2	596.2
<i>Informal Care</i>								
Siblings	7.8	9.3	21.2	22.9	121.8	126.9	150.8	159.1
Other Relative	201.9	233.3	162.7	201.7	184.0	272.1	548.7	707.1
Non-relative	78.5	85.6	94.4	114.3	139.5	189.2	312.4	389.1
<i>Informal Care Only</i>	<i>281.7</i>	<i>259.5</i>	<i>161.1</i>	<i>149.1</i>	<i>472.3</i>	<i>500.2</i>	<i>915.1</i>	<i>908.7</i>
Total Informal Care*	313.5	313.8	305.6	312.9	487.2	539.5	1106.4	1166.2
<i>Other Care</i>								
Self-care /Hospital	1.6	na	1.8	na	53.2	na	56.6	na
Parent Care Only	363.5	na	226.6	na	890.1	na	1480.2	na
Total Other Care	365.1	386.8	228.4	250.9	943.3	943.8	1536.8	1581.0
Total Children	726.7	778.6	729.8	768.9	1431.4	1538.3	2887.9	3085.9
<i>Type of Care as Percentage of Total Number of Children</i>								
Formal Care	11.0	17.3	46.8	48.0	2.4	6.0	15.8	19.3
Informal Care	43.1	40.3	41.9	40.7	34.0	35.1	38.3	37.8
<i>Both Formal & Informal</i>	<i>4.3</i>	<i>7.3</i>	<i>19.8</i>	<i>21.3</i>	<i>1.0</i>	<i>2.5</i>	<i>6.6</i>	<i>8.3</i>
Neither Formal / Informal	50.2	49.7	31.2	32.6	64.6	61.4	52.5	51.2
Total**	104.3	107.3	119.8	121.3	101.0	102.5	106.6	108.3

*Total Formal Care and Total Informal Care are not mutually exclusive but include those who use both Formal and Informal Care arrangements.

**Totals (Formal Care + Informal Care + Neither) are greater than 100 by the percent of children using both formal and informal care arrangements.

Source: ABS (1988a:5); ABS (1994b:5).

As indicated by the figures in Table 4.1, the most noticeable change to Australian patterns of child-care between 1987 and 1993 was a rise in the use of formal care arrangements. For example, the number of infants and toddlers (i.e., 0-2 year olds) using formal care arrangements rose from 80,000 in 1987 to 134,500 in 1993 and the number of primary school aged children (i.e., 6 to 11 year olds) rose from 34,000 in 1987 to 92,800 in 1993. The latter was due, in part, to the introduction of the Before and After School Hours Program, while the availability of Occasional Care contributed

to the former. The rise in formal care arrangements also resulted from the slight increase in the use of Long Day Care for the 0-2 and 3-5 year old age groups and in an escalation of usage of Family Day Care for all children under twelve years of age. Family Day Care was used four and a half times more in 1993 than in 1987 for six to eleven year olds, two and a half times more for infants and toddlers (0-2 year olds) and almost twice as much for preschool aged children (3 -5 year olds). The number of children cared for in some type of formal arrangement (including those using only formal care and those using both formal and informal care arrangements) consequently rose significantly for the youngest and oldest age groups.

Other changes in child-care arrangements occurred in the use of informal care, and in the percentage of children using both informal and formal care and using neither of these care arrangements. While the number of children using informal care arrangements rose between 1987 and 1993 for all three age groups, (up 300 for 0-2 year olds, 7,300 for preschoolers, and 52,300 for 6-11 year olds), the proportion of children in the 0-2 year and 3-5 year age groups decreased (2.8 and 1.2% respectively). In contrast, the 6-11 year age group increased its usage of informal care arrangements by 1.1 percent: 27,000 more primary school aged children used only informal care arrangements in 1993 than did in 1987. The number of children cared for only in informal care arrangements, dropped by 22,200 or 7.9 percent for infants and toddlers and by 12,000 or 7.4 percent for preschoolers. The percentage of children using both formal and informal care increased by 1.5 per cent for preschoolers and primary school children and rose marginally more for infants and toddlers (up 3.0%). Subsequently, the percentage of 0-2 year olds and 6-11 year olds using neither formal nor informal care fell by 1.5 percent and 3.2 percent, respectively. That is, there was a decline in the number of infants/ toddlers and primary school children being cared for exclusively by their parents during this three year period. The number of preschoolers using neither formal nor informal care arrangements, however, rose, albeit by only 1.4%. This was perhaps as a consequence of the availability of preschool places not being able to meet the demand for them.

At first glance, child-care arrangements in Canada, as displayed in Table 4.2 (below), look very similar to those exhibited in Australia. There is, however, a noticeable difference. Although the overall use of the different types of care, as percentages of all

Table 4.2: Type of Care Arrangements Used by Children^a in Canada, 1988.

TYPE OF CARE ARRANGEMENT	NUMBER OF CHILDREN ('000)			
	0 - 2 years	3 - 5 years	6 - 12 years	0 - 12 years
<i>Formal Care</i>				
Pre-School *	-	49.8	-	49.8
Day Care**	45.7	79.4	13.4	138.5
Before/After School Care	-	64.0	47.6	111.6
Other Formal Care				
Total Formal Care***	45.7	193.2	61.0	399.9
<i>Informal Care</i>				
Siblings	-	-	142.7	142.7
Other Relative	107.2	89.9	163.1	360.2
Non-Relative	182.8	162.0	217.6	
Total Informal Care***	290.0	251.9	523.4	1065.3
<i>Other Care</i>				
Self-care / Hospital			185.3	185.3
Parent Care Only	101.5	161.0	530.2	792.7
Total Other Care	101.5	161.0	715.5	978.0
Total Children	492.9	570.2	1549.8	2612.9
<i>Type Of Care As Percentage Of Total Care Arrangements</i>				
Formal Care	9.2	33.9	3.9	15.0
Informal Care	58.8	44.1	33.8	40.8
Neither	32.0	22.0	62.3	44.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<i>Primary Care As Percentage Of Total Care Arrangements (Excluding School And Kindergarten)#</i>				
Formal Care Only	12.0	21.0	8.0	13.0
Informal Care****	35.0	29.0	21.0	29.0
Parent	30.0	32.0	37.0	33.0
Relative	22.0	16.0	14.0	17.0
Other	1.0	2.0	5.0	3.0
Self-Care Or By Sibling	0.0	0.0	15.0	5.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

^a Figures were obtained from the Canadian National Child Care Survey. See Statistics Canada (1992a) for information on sampling and extrapolation procedures.

*Includes Nurseries in Canada; **Day Care in Canada incorporates both Family Day Care and Long Day Care; ***Total Formal Care and Total Informal Care are not mutually exclusive but include those who use both Formal and Informal Care arrangements; ****Informal care includes those using formal and informal care but excludes care by siblings and relatives.

Primary child-care arrangements are for the age groups 0-2 years, 3-5 years, 6-9 years, exclude school and kindergarten and do not take into account combination care used by approximately 17% of the children under 6 years and 13% of the school aged children. Care by a parent refers to care by the spouse or partner of the parent with primary child-care responsibilities while s/he was engaged in the paid workforce. Other care refers to situations not considered child-care services, e.g., sports and recreation programs and music lessons.

Source: Statistics Canada (1992a); Doherty et al (1995).

care arrangements, were almost equivalent between the two countries in the late 1980s, differences are evident between similar age groups. For instance, the use of formal care for all children under 12 years of age in Australia and in Canada was around fifteen per cent, however, the percentage of children using this form of care was three times as much as it was in Australia for primary school children. This is

understandable considering that Before and After School Care was available in Canada in 1988, though not in Australia: the Before and After School Care Program in Australia came into existence in 1991. The higher percentage of formal care used by the Australian 3-5 year age group appears related to higher preschool attendance (usually a part day affair), given that Australian children in this age group are more likely than children in either of the other age groups to use a combination of both formal and informal arrangements. Australian preschoolers are also more likely to be cared for by their parents than are their Canadian counterparts.

The most apparent differences between Australian and Canadian child-care arrangements, however, appear with respect to the under three year old age group. Canadian infants and toddlers are more likely to be in a formal or an informal care arrangement with 9.2 per cent of 0-2 year olds being cared for in a formal arrangement compared to 6.6 per cent of Australian children in this age group. The Canadian percentage of infants and toddlers using informal care arrangements is 20 percentage points higher than it is for the Australian under three year olds. The greater proportion of Canadian mothers of children under three years of age participating in the labour force would account for this disparity.

During the 1970s and 1980s, the annual growth rate of formal or regulated child-care spaces in Canada ranged from 10 to 16 per cent. In contrast to the dramatic rise in formal care in Australia as a result of the federal governments child-care strategy, by 1993 the growth rate in Canada had dropped to 3.5 per cent. Doherty et al (1995) suggest that although economic market theory, adopted by the Canadian federal government and the majority of the provincial governments, would have predicted that the supply of services would increase to meet the escalation in demand, this did not occur in relation to regulated child-care spaces. Instead, many parents, finding themselves unable to afford the relatively high fees formal care providers needed to charge in order to survive, were forced to seek unregulated care for their children.²⁴

²⁴ See Chapter V for a discussion of government involvement in the provision and support of new and existing formal child care spaces that are accessible and affordable, and Chapter VI for a discussion of the importance of regulation and quality assurance in the child care industry.

Table 4.3: Number and Percentage of Children Under 12 Years of Age Using Formal Care by Type, Australia and Canada, 1992.

TYPE OF CARE	AUSTRALIA		CANADA	
	<i>No. of children ('000)</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>No. of children ('000)</i>	<i>%</i>
Pre-school	236.9	7.7		
Family Day Care	80.7	2.6	45.7	0.9
Day Care*	146.7	4.7	262.8	5.3
Before / After School Care	85.8	2.8	61.0	1.2
Other Formal Care	80.0	2.6		
<i>Total Formal Care</i>	<i>596.2</i>	<i>19.3</i>	<i>371.6</i>	<i>7.5</i>
Total Number children '000	3085.8	100.0	4953.3	100.0

*Day Care figures for Australia refer to Long Day Care attendance while Day Care in Canada refers to centre based child-care which also includes nursery schools and pre-schools.

Sources: ABS (1994b:5); CRRU (1995:86)

Consequently, as is shown in Table 4.3, in 1992 the percentage of Canadian children in a formal child-care arrangement was less than half that for Australian children. This was despite a larger population of children under the age of 12 years and more children attending day care in Canada. However, while day care in Australia refers to Long Day Care, in Canada it includes nursery school and pre-schools, as well as centre-based long day care. Fees paid to child-care providers is, however, only one measure of the cost of child-care²⁵; another is the time adults spend in caring for their own children and/or for other children.

Parental Child-Care Arrangements: Time on Child-Care

Time use offers a gender specific measure of the cost of child-care. It also provides an indication of how much of this scarce resource men and women contribute to the care of children. The impact of child-care policy can be seen on patterns of child-care arrangements and in measures of time spent on child-care activities by parents and by the men and women who care for other people's children. In the previous section, Australian parents were seen to have increasingly used formal care services made available by government funding and initiatives, while Canadian parents increased their use of informal child-care providers. In this section, the time Australian and Canadian men and women spend on child-care activities is investigated. In both countries women participate in child-care activities more than men, and do so for a

²⁵ The cost of child-care is discussed in more detail in Chapter VI in relation to the issue of affordability.

longer period of time²⁶. Indeed, the gender differences are more striking than the cross-national disparities.

Table 4.4: Time Spent on Primary Child-Care Activities*, for Men and Women, by Status Group**, Canada and Australia, 1992.

AVERAGE TIME SPENT ON PRIMARY CHILD-CARE ACTIVITIES				
Status Group	Canada		Australia	
	<i>Min. / day</i>	<i>Hours / Week</i>	<i>Min. / day</i>	<i>Hours / Week</i>
<i>All Males</i>	15	1.75	14	1.63
All participating men	94	10.97	74	8.63
Caring for own children	na	na	69	8.05
Caring for other children	na	na	80	9.33
<i>All Females</i>	36	4.2	49	5.72
All participating women	139	16.22	152	17.73
Caring for own children	na	na	138	16.10
Caring for other children	na	na	105	12.25
Child-Care Participation Rates (Per Cent Of Population)				
<i>All Males</i>	16.0		18.7	
Caring for own children	na		14.8	
Caring for other children	na		1.4	
<i>All Females</i>	26.0		32.3	
Caring for own children	na		26.6	
Caring for other children	na		4.1	

*Primary child care refers to child-care as a main activity rather than as a secondary or tertiary activity that occurs simultaneously with the main activity recognising that people frequently do more than one activity at the same time. All child-care refers to all activities involving child-care including main activities, secondary and tertiary activities.

* *Status Groups: All males/females refer to all wo/men in the survey population; All participating wo/men refers to participants of child-care activities that relate to their and other children (Canada); Caring for own children - participants of child-care activities that involve the participants own children (Australia); Caring for other children - participants of child-care activities that involve children other than the participants own children (Australia).

Sources: ABS (1994a). Statistics Canada (1992b).

As shown in Table 4.4, women in Canada in 1992 tended to spend at least twice as much time on average participating in child-care activities than did men, spending 4.2 hours per week providing primary child-care as compared to 1.4 hours per week spent by men. The pattern was similar in 1986 with the average time spent in child-care activities ranging from a low of 1.75 hours per week for employed men to 3.15 hours per week for employed women on up to 7.35 hours per week for women in paid

²⁶ Data on child-care is collected for primary or main activities as well as for secondary or simultaneous activities. Data for primary child-care refers to child-care as a main activity only. Data for all child-care includes both main and simultaneous child-care activities. Much of the time spent caring for children, occurs in conjunction with other tasks.

employment (Parliament, 1989). Although the pattern remains the same, these figures increase dramatically, as would be expected, when only those males and females who participated in child-care activities are included in the analysis. For example, in the 1992 Canadian survey, 26 percent of women participated in child-care as a primary activity as opposed to 16 percent of men. On average, the women spent 16.22 hours per week on child-care activities, while the men spent 10.97 hours per week on average.

Participation times rise markedly if only those with a child under the age of 5 years are taken into account, and continue to vary by gender, family and employment status. While the average time spent on child-care activities per day by Canadians, with children aged five years and older, ranged from 18 minutes for employed fathers to 84 minutes for female lone mothers keeping house, the average times spent participating in primary child-care activities per day for Canadians, with children under five years of age, were: 72 minutes per day for employed fathers; 108 minutes per day for employed lone mothers; 132 minutes per day for employed mothers with a spouse; 192 minutes for not-employed mothers with a spouse; and 222 minutes per day for not-employed lone mothers (Statistics Canada, 1995a, 1995b).

Another illustration of the gender gap, which provides a measure of the impact of parental employment on the average amount of time spent on child-care, is whether participation occurs on a weekday or on the weekend. As the statistics for Australia in Table 4.5 demonstrate, the average Australian father increased his child-care participation on the weekend by 15 minutes a day, effectively allowing the average Australian mother to spend only 129 minutes per day on child-care during the weekend instead of her weekday average of 142 minutes per day. Like their Canadian counterparts, Australian women tend to provide twice as much child-care as Australian men who participated in main child-care activities. However, when secondary and tertiary activities are taken into account both the participation rate and time expenditure disparities lessen. The participation rate for fathers almost doubles when all activities are included coming within seven percentage points of mothers who increase their participation by only 2.2 per cent. While women caring for other children increase their participation five-fold to have a rate slightly higher than fathers when all activities are considered, the participation rate of men caring for other children remains

below 10 per cent despite a seven-fold increase. Despite a significant increase in the average daily time expended on child-care activities, the gender disparity drops slightly for all participating men and women and for fathers and mothers.

Table 4.5: Time Spent on Primary and all Child-Care Activities on Weekdays and Weekends, for Men and Women, by Status Group, Australia, 1992.

AVERAGE TIME SPENT ON CHILD-CARE ACTIVITY				
Status Group	Primary Child-Care (Min/day)		All Child-Care	
	Weekday	Weekend	Min. / day	Hours. / Week
<i>All Males</i>	13	15	72	8.40
All participating men	70	83	284	33.13
Caring for own children	65	80	309	36.05
Caring for other children	76	88	68	7.93
<i>All Females</i>	53	39	190	22.16
All participating women	157	136	510	59.50
Caring for own children	142	129	581	67.78
Caring for other children	101	115	100	11.67
Participation Rates (Per Cent Of Population)				
	Weekday	Weekend	Daily	
<i>All Males</i>	18.9	18.2	25.2	
Caring for own children	14.9	14.7	21.0	
Caring for other children	1.2	1.8	9.9	
<i>All Females</i>	33.8	28.6	37.3	
Caring for own children	27.9	23.4	28.8	
Caring for other children	5.0	4.7	22.6	

*Primary child care refers to child-care as a main activity rather than as a secondary or tertiary activity that occurs simultaneously with the main activity recognising that people frequently do more than one activity at the same time. All child-care refers to all activities involving child-care including main activities, secondary and tertiary activities. * Status Groups: All males/females refer to all wo/men in the survey population; Caring for own children - participants of child-care activities that involve the participants own children; Caring for other children - participants of child-care activities that involve children other than the participants own children.
Source: ABS (1994b).

The data in Table 4.4 and Table 4.5 also indicate that women are more likely than men to care for children other than their own, and do so for slightly longer periods of time. The difference is 2.92 hours per week on average for main child-care activities and 3.73 hours per week for all child-care activities. As would be expected, those caring for the children of others do so, attentively, reporting the child-care as a primary activity. Both the men and women who care for someone else’s children decrease their average time expenditure by 1.4 hours per week and 0.58 hours per week respectively, when all activities are taken into account. Men caring for other children spend more time on primary child-care activities than do fathers expending 9.3 hours per week compared to 8.05 hours per week. However, men caring for the children of

others spend only 7.93 hours per week when all child-care activities are included compared to 36.05 hours per week spent by fathers. For women the transformation is even greater. Women caring for other children spend 3.97 hours per week less than mothers do on primary child-care activities, though lose 0.58 hours per week when all child-care activities are considered. In contrast, mothers increase their participation by 51.57 hours to total 67.78 hours per week in all child-care activities. This clearly indicates that the time cost of child-care for parents, especially for mothers, is of no minor consequence.

Time spent on child-care activities has changed little over the past twenty years, despite women's increased expenditure of time in the paid work force. For instance, the average time spent by Australian males on primary child-care activities (including the care of one's own and other children) in 1974 was 14 minutes per day, the same as it was in 1992, despite an increase of 4 minutes per day recorded in 1987²⁷. For women, the average time spent on child-care was 60 minutes per day in 1974, 5 minutes per day less than it was in 1987, though 11 minutes per day more than was recorded in 1992. These changes, especially the latter, appear related to the continued rise in women's labour force participation. However, it is worth noting that the change in men's child-care participation has not kept up with the decline in women's child-care participation. Indeed, if there is any change at all, the gender gap seems to be very slowly widening. The situation in Canada is not that much different. Although slightly fewer Canadian men than Australian men appear to participate in child-care activities they do so for longer periods of time. Similarly, fewer Canadian women are engaged in child-care, though their participation is somewhat less in duration than it is for their Australian counterparts.

Summary

Throughout the past century child-care has been conceptualised as a welfare service

²⁷ These figures are obtained from Bittman (1992) Appendix B - Comparison of Surveys (1974-1987). The data for 1974 includes that collected by the Cities Commission (1975) in Melbourne from people 20 to 60 years of age using a variation of the Szalai 37 activities code. The data for 1987 was collected by the Australian Bureau of Statistics in its Pilot Survey of Time Use in the Sydney Statistical Division. Only data for people 20 to 60 years of age, similarly coded, was used in the comparison. While data for 1992 (ABS, 1994) is not directly comparable, representing capital city and rest of state populations and includes responses from those 15 years and older, the figures provide some indication of change over time.

for the 'disadvantaged', as pre-school education, a problem of recruitment and retention of female labour for employers, a maternal (parental) responsibility, an issue of equality of opportunity, and a service primarily for the middle class. Child-care has also been influenced by feminism inside and outside government, private priorities in wage fixing and collective bargaining, pronatalism, and immigration. As Brennan has noted,

[t]he great strength of the Australian child care system and the feature which makes it of particular interest in terms of international comparison, is the extent to which it has been shaped by the energies of women working in, or closely allied with, community-based / organisations - from the philanthropists of the late nineteenth century to the feminists, trade unionists and bureaucrats of the last two decades. (1994:213-214)

Further, child-care provision has been an important issue in child welfare and poverty (Heitlinger, 1993) since the availability of child-care services and the circumstances under which mothers (parents) themselves provide care are so fundamental to the level of income of families with children.

These developments were paralleled in Canada and Australia, for the most part, to varying degrees and success, until fairly recently. A divergence seems to have occurred since the late 1980s when the Australian federal government furthered its commitment to the provision and support of care for children, while its Canadian counterpart increasingly relinquished most of its child-care responsibilities. As a result, different patterns of child-care have emerged. These are arguably reflections of the distinct intertwining of the politics of federalism, party politics, the historical legacies of policy development and the politics of child-care in each country. Moreover, the extent to which these factors have influenced the development of child-care in Australia and Canada have been shown to vary as a consequence of the relative strength and position of advocate groups, of the favourableness of the predominant ideology and party in office to government involvement in child-care and, perhaps most importantly, of the degree and willingness of the various groups involved to reach a compromise.

Conditions appeared to be more favourable for the development and implementation of a national child-care strategy in Australia during the late 1980s than they were in Canada. A Labor government, favourable to federal involvement in state affairs, open to the demands of femocrats, and easily convinced of the benefits for the economy of investment in child care, was not hard pressed at election time to further a commitment

made earlier in the decade, though the strategy fell short of what the child care advocates and femocrats had hoped for. Instead of developing a coherent policy for a national child-care system, the Labor government reinforced the existing fragmented structure of child-care services as it increased financial support and expanded service provision. More recently, under pressure from mounting research and in light of numerous reviews and parliamentary reports, attempts have been made by the federal government to standardise the provision and quality of child-care services across Australia. Unfortunately, similar efforts have not been apparent in Canada. In fact, the economic and political climate in Canada has been even less favourable for the development of a national child care strategy, let alone a national child-care system, during the 1990s than it was during the 1980s.

The impact of child-care policy can be seen on patterns of child-care arrangements and in measure of time spent on child-care activities by parents and by the men and women who care for other people's children. While Australian parents have increasingly used the formal care services made available by government funding and initiatives, Canadian parents have had to increase their use of informal providers. Nevertheless, both Australian and Canadian parents are more likely to care for their children themselves or put the care of their children into the hands of a relative than in the care of regulated strangers. This means that Australian and Canadian women, mothers in particular, continue to perform the majority of child-care, though the amount of care is effected by their employment and family status and by the age of their youngest child.

Having provided a general overview of the history of government involvement in child-care in Australia and Canada, the discussion in the ensuing chapters turns to the examination of specific child-care related policies and their intended and unintended outcomes. Existing child-care arrangements and service provision in each country have been shaped by policies which prescribe levels, mechanisms and eligibility for government assistance, and regulate service provision and quality. In addition, some economic, education and employment policies have also impacted upon the development of child-care in Australia and Canada.

Subsequent changes in government child-care orientations, objectives and institutional practices are analysed in more detail in the ensuing chapters. Recent developments in

child-care policy and funding arrangements are examined in Chapter V. The demand for child-care is examined in Chapter VI in relation to issues of child-care availability, affordability and access to government assistance before the focus turns to a detailed discussion on the funding mechanisms for child-care in each country presented in Chapter VII.

CHAPTER V

CHILD-CARE IN THE 1990S: SHIFTS IN POLICY OR MORE OF THE SAME?

Introduction

In the previous chapter it was shown that child-care policy in Australia and Canada has been taking shape in a formal sense since the early 1970s, primarily in response to the needs of the labour market and the corresponding increase in the work force participation of women with children. Throughout the 1990s child-care policy in Australia and Canada continued to be a prominent political issue, especially during election campaigns. In Australia, bipartisan support for government involvement in assisting parents to meet their child-care needs is evident, though the level and mix of direct and indirect financial assistance to make formal child-care accessible is a major source of difference between the political parties.

In this chapter it will be demonstrated that despite significant structural differences between Australia and Canada there is a discernible similarity in the direction child-care policy is heading in each country. The Australian and Canadian states will be shown to have accepted responsibility for some families and children, but not for others. Focusing on policy platforms and election promises, it will be argued that the child-care needs of families are viewed by political parties primarily in relation to the parents' contributions to the (formal) economy; the needs of children being subjugated, for the most part, to the work-related needs of parents.

The influence of economic rationalism on government budgets, with an emphasis on deficit reduction, continued on from the 1980s into the 1990s in both Canada and Australia¹. Consequently, the principles of privatisation and rationalisation have become increasingly entrenched in the political rhetoric and policies used to justify massive cuts to social programs. In the case of child-care, a rhetoric of 'choice' has been used to sell government policy, first in Canada and more recently in Australia. In Australia, a shift away from direct government funding to indirect funding of the children's services is now taking place. It will be shown that the apparent achievements of a Labor government to build a national child-care system in Australia have been compromised by economic and managerial pressures to rationalise social budgets and responsibilities. Moreover, as the Canadian experience attests,

1 The trend began during the Thatcher years in Britain and the Reagan years in the USA.

particularly that witnessed in Ontario, recent shifts in child-care policy in Australia could also lead to the rapid decline of publicly funded child-care, an increase in child-care costs, reduced availability of child-care places, mounting pressure to use informal arrangements and heightened concern over the quality of care. The lack of cohesive developments in child-care may be attributed to the absence of clear differences in the policy platforms of the major parties and the status of child-care in economic policy. As Mitchell (1997a, 1997c) has demonstrated, these factors have influenced the development of family policy, as a whole, in Australia during the last decade.

Australian Child-Care Policy

Child-care has remained on the Australian political agenda throughout the 1990s, assuming a significant role in economic policy. The Children's Services Program remains the mainstay of federal government involvement. A number of policy initiatives, programs, reviews and funding arrangements were devised to achieve the government's goals and objectives, the main goal being

to assist families with dependent children to participate in the workforce and the general community by ensuring that child care is affordable for low and middle income families and by improving the supply and quality of child care. (Wangmann, 1995:24)

The improvement of access to a range of quality child-care services that are affordable, efficiently managed and culturally appropriate were specified as the main objectives leading to the achievement of this goal. The first priority was to support the workforce participation by families with young children, and second, to support the provision of child-care for children of non-working parents and for children with special needs.

In its attempt to meet these objectives, the Labor government expanded the number of available child-care places, instigated a review of economic issues relating to the provision of public child-care, established a national advisory body, sought participation from the States and Territories in the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) to review their roles and responsibilities for child-care, and established a National Childcare Accreditation Council (NCAC). However, since March 1996 when a Liberal/National Party Coalition government was elected the goal and objectives for child-care of the Commonwealth government have been revised. Many critics have suggested that this marks the beginning of the end for government funded child-care in Australia (Loane, 1997).

This section will discuss major shifts in child-care policy in Australia in the 1990s and the recommendations for change proposed by various political parties, commissions and task forces. First, the policies and election platforms of the Australian Labor Party pertaining to the expansion of formal child-care places are examined. This is followed by discussions on the Functional Review of Child Care, on changes to national child-care advisory bodies, and on the recommendations of the Law Reform Commission, all of which took place while the Labor Party was in power. Liberal Coalition policy commitments, announced prior to the 1990, 1993 and 1996 elections, are examined in light of recent policy initiatives. And finally, these commitments are discussed in relation to the recommendations of the Economic Planning Advisory Committee Child Care Task Force.

Policies of The Labor Government

The Labor party came to office in 1983 with a universal child-care policy and a philosophy that access to community care was the 'right' of every child. The aim of the policy, discussed in Chapter IV, was to complement parental care by providing 'all children with developmental and social activities in safe surroundings provided by skilled and caring people for the range of hours which meets the children's needs and those of their parents/carers' (Grimes 1982:2 cited in Jamrozik and Sweeney 1996: 131) ². Putting the policy into practice involved the establishment of the Children's Services Program (CSP), state and local government involvement and the allocation of funds to high need areas based on a planning model (Cox, 1996). The CSP, through its various changes, remained the central component of the Labor government's child-care policy up until the party lost power in 1996. This was in spite of the dissension within the government in the late 1980s over the continued existence of publicly-funded child-care, with the conflict resulting from the persistent tension between the government's economic and social justice objectives (Brennan, 1994:186).

With the rise of economic rationalism during the mid-1980s, the language of policy changed from equity to efficiency (Cox, 1996), and policy was gradually re-shaped to re-define 'need' principally in economic terms. In order to keep child-care on the political agenda advocates lobbied and worked inside and outside coalitions of interest promoting child-care as essential to women's participation in the labour market and to

² This child-care policy was written by Eva Cox when she was one of Senator Grimes' staff.

the efficient use of their skills (Cox, 1994, 1996). The government restructured the CSP in 1986 so that children's needs were made secondary to the needs of the labour market (Brennan, 1994). Children of parents already in the workforce were given first priority of access to child-care services, followed by children of parents training for work or seeking work, children with disabilities, children at risk of abuse or neglect, and finally children of single parents or parents with more than one child at home.

Jamrozik and Sweeney argue that the Commonwealth government's restructuring of the CSP redefined the boundaries between care and welfare, effectively becoming an attempt to exclude those whose needs for care were other than work-related and making provision of child-care a new form of occupational welfare. In effect, tension within the government and the bureaucracy between those for and against the expansion of publicly funded child-care services brought about reductions in the government's planned expenditure and restrictions on eligibility to child-care services and assistance.

For example, time restrictions on the use of family day care aimed to limit extended hours of care and prevent it from becoming a pseudo foster care; raising the minimum fee excluded many families on low incomes; transferring the responsibility for pre-schools to the States; limited funding of occasional care, used mostly by mothers not in the workforce; and obligation on families where a mother was not in the paid employment to surrender their child care place if a family with a working mother sought care. (Jamrozik and Sweeney, 1996:132-133)

Although the Finance Minister, Senator Peter Walsh, among others, vehemently opposed the government's commitment to the expansion of publicly funded services³, child-care policy under the Hawke government became increasingly integrated with social security and economic policies and with labour market concerns (Brennan, 1994). In 1986, the government encouraged private employers to provide child-care services for their staff by introducing tax concessions and other measures to help them to do so⁴. In its 1990 election campaign Labor promised to expand its 1988 National Child Care Strategy by an additional 78,000 child-care places, with 28,000 to be provided by commercial operators and employers. In order to achieve equity between families using public and private services, the government extended fee

3 See Brennan (1994: Chapters 8 & 9) for a detailed discussion of the battle within the Labor government over the continued expansion of children's services during the latter half of the 1980s.

4 These included the Fringe Tax Benefit exemptions for employers who provided, on or off the worksite, child-care places for their employees.

relief/Childcare Assistance to users of commercial long day care centres (Brennan, 1994:200). This initiative resulted in significant growth in the private sector which varied across the States and Territories, and less marked increases in employer-sponsored child-care (Wangmann 1995:21)⁵. Prior to the extension of fee relief and 'despite the continued movement of women into paid work, there were no signs, in either affluent or high needs areas, of any moves by the commercial sector to establish centres' (Cox, 1996:89). Nonetheless, the trends towards commercial and employer-provided care and a shift from supply-side to demand-side funding continues in Australia and in other countries⁶.

The economic importance of child-care to the nation was made particularly obvious during the 1993 election campaign when Prime Minister Paul Keating presented child-care as part of his economic statement 'Investing in the Nation'. Labor promised to meet all demands for work-related child-care by the year 2001, in part, with the provision of a non-means-tested child-care rebate to supplement the existing fee relief program (Childcare Assistance). As Brennan has noted, the rebate was constructed

as a clear alternative to a tax rebate ... or deduction ... [and] will be available to low income individuals and families who would not have paid sufficient tax to benefit from a tax concession. (1994:211)

This was the second indication of a shift from supply-side to demand-side funding; the introduction of Childcare Assistance being the first.

Going into the 1993 election Labor still had to deliver on previous promises. Little more than half the long day care places promised in the 1988 National Child Care Strategy (NCCS), and none of the places promised in the 1992 strategy, were operational. This shortfall was primarily the consequence of the unwillingness of state governments to enter into cost sharing arrangements with the federal government, and

⁵ The tightening of the Fringe Benefit Tax exemption rules by the Australian Taxation Office at the end of 1995 effectively put an end to salary sacrifice child-care arrangements for 5000 children of employees using employer-sponsored places at commercial centres. The result has been the closure of a number of centres that were dependent on employer-sponsorship and the substantial increase in child-care costs for the effected employees, some of whom having to quit their jobs to take care of their children.

⁶ Clare Ungerson (1990) warns of the trend in Britain toward employer-supported child-care as a means of profit maintenance rather than an attempt to build greater equality between men and women. Borchorst and Siim (1987) have shown how admission to child-care centres in Denmark are closely linked to the workforce status of parents. Cleveland, Gunderson and Hyatt (1996) provide Canadian evidence to confirm the findings of US studies which indicate that the expected wage of mothers with young children exerts a significant positive impact on both the decision to purchase market forms of child-care and the decision to engage in paid employment.

the lack of sponsors to provide the necessary finance (Brennan, 1994). In an attempt to meet this shortfall after winning the 1993 election, Labor made interest free loans available to non-profit groups and employers to cover half the capital costs of establishing new child-care services, and provided grants for the non-profit organisations to cover the remaining half of these costs (Brennan, 1994). However, as Brennan has noted, the fulfilment of the government's pledge was largely beyond its control as the Commonwealth no longer provided all of the required capital (1994:212). Still, the number of child-care places funded under the CSP expanded from 196,000 in 1993 to 301,000 by March 1996 to serve 560,000 children⁷ (Department of Health and Family Services, 1996).

In 1996, both the Labor government and the Coalition Opposition promised to retain Child Care Assistance and the Childcare Cash Rebate and to deliver 'an expanded and more flexible child-care system' (The Age, 23/2/96) that would see 450,000 formal child-care places in operation by the year 2001. The Liberal/National party indicated that the increase of 162,000 formal child-places would be achieved indirectly via the Coalition's Family Tax Package, with an additional outlay of \$5 million per year for temporary child-care for disadvantaged job seekers. In contrast, the Labor government's strategy was for direct funding, to the value of \$58 million over 4 years, for formal child-care places and other child-care services within the CSP, with priority given to school-aged care. Labor earmarked funds for the immediate development of 3,000 outside school hours care places (\$5.2 million) and for 20,000 vacation care places (\$15.4 million), as well as for 3,000 family day care places for children under two years of age (\$9.6 million). In addition to promising an extra ten mobile child-care services and an injection of \$60 million into services for disabled and disadvantaged children (including indigenous children), the Labor government also planned to establish a Childcare Switchboard Information Service, having realised that many parents were unaware of the services and assistance available to them⁸. The Labor government's strategy was clearly in keeping with its previously stated order of priorities: not only were children of non-working parents considered last, they were to be limited to 12 hours per week of subsidised care⁹.

⁷ The number of children served is greater than the number of available spaces since many spaces are used by two children each on a part-time basis.

⁸ For instance, in 1996, 60.6 per cent of parents of children eligible for the Childcare Cash Rebate did not claimed because they were not aware of the rebate (ABS, 1997b).

⁹ The Liberal / National party promised not to implement this 12 hour rule.

To fend off criticism that its child-care policies neglected those caring for children at home, Labor also announced the introduction of a Home Child Care Allowance (HCCA). This allowance of \$30 per week, payable to the primary carer (almost always the mother) in families with young children, came into effect in June 1994, effectively replacing the dependent spouse rebate. While providing a benefit for the main breadwinner (almost always the male partner), the rebate had ignored the needs of the primary caregiver (Brennan, 1994). In contrast, the Home Child Care Allowance was designed to acknowledge the economic needs of parents caring for children in the home, though as Brennan has noted 'it does nothing to address their needs for child care services' (1994:211). This was the third indication of a shift toward demand-side subsidies.

During its term in office, the Labor government instigated a number of initiatives that would impact either directly or indirectly upon the implementation of its child-care policies. These initiatives, discussed in turn in the remainder of this section, include a review of key functional areas in relation to Commonwealth, State and Territory responsibilities, the establishment of a national child-care advisory body, the ratification of international conventions and the review of Acts administered by the (then) Commonwealth Department of Health, Housing and Community Services.

Functional Review of Child-Care

In October of 1990 at a Special Premiers Conference it was decided that the Commonwealth, States and Territories would undertake a review of fundamental powers to identify areas of functional responsibility, overlap and duplication of services and the most efficient mechanisms for providing integrated services between the different levels of government (Wangmann, 1995). Child-care was one of the policy areas nominated for review.

The scope of the child-care review was broad, including preschools as well as the various types of formal and informal care arrangements. According to Wangmann, the inclusion of preschools in the review was significant:

It indicated a recognition of the need to consider integrating both systems - Long Day Care services and preschools - which, while historically developing separately, had a similar client group and aims. (1995:44)

The report of the Commonwealth, States and Territories Working Party (CSTWP), identified three levels of concern; service delivery, the division of responsibilities

between the levels of government, and intergovernmental relations. The need for coordination and integration between services was emphasised. This entailed a clarification of functional responsibilities and the ongoing co-operation between the three tiers of government - federal, state and territory, and local. Figure 5.1 lists the existing sole and shared responsibilities of each level of government. For instance, the federal government is responsible for funding and planning services covered by the Children's Services Program, the states and territories are responsible for preschools and for licensing child-care centres, while local governments provide the vast majority of child-care services across Australia in conjunction with the non-government sector (commercial and non-profit)¹⁰. This division of powers has important implications for the delivery of equitable and quality child-care services.

Figure 5.1: Responsibilities for Child-Care by Level of Government, Australia.

LEVEL OF GOVERNMENT	RESPONSIBILITY
Commonwealth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> < administration and strategic planning of CSP services < administration and operational subsidisation of Childcare Assistance < development of priority access guidelines for CSP services < promotion of choice and diversity in service types
State / Territory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> < setting of licensing standards < administration of licensing codes < policy making, planning and funding for preschools < recurrent funding for all not-for-profit centre-based long day care in NSW and for Victorian day nurseries < policy making, program development, planning and funding for centre-based care not covered by the 1988 National Child Care Strategy e.g., occasional care in NSW and ACT, some outside school hours care in Victoria < family day care service delivery in South Australia, < planning and development of Technical and Further Education (TAFE) based child-care < policy, planning and administration of Commonwealth funding for vacation care
Local	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> < provision of land < building and development approvals for new centres < direct service provision across all service types
Commonwealth, State/Territory and Local Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> < cost-sharing of area-based planning, high needs area approvals, site location and sponsorship decisions < development of services infrastructure

* The Commonwealth provides a block grant (Specific Purpose Payment) to the States to allocate to specific projects (e.g., vacation care) with minimal conditions (CSTWP, 1991).
Source: Wangmann (1995)

Under the 1988 NCCS the three spheres of government entered into a cost-sharing arrangement for agreed service types that involved the sharing of responsibilities for:

¹⁰ Local government services alone are estimated to account for between 20 and 30 per cent of the total provision (CSTWP, 1991 cited in Wangmann, 1995).

area-based planning; high need area approvals, site locations and sponsorship decisions; and for the development of service infrastructure. Local government has sole responsibility for the provision of land, for building and development approvals for new centres, and for direct service provision across all service types.

National Child-Care Advisory Bodies

In June 1989 the Children's Service's Program National Advisory Committee (CSPNAC) was established to assist the Commonwealth achieve its objectives connected with the provision of services within the CSP. Such a body had long been advocated by children's service's organisations (Wangmann, 1995). Comprising of representatives from the State and Territory planning committees and other appointed experts or experienced individuals, the Committee was to provide advice to the Minister on the implementation of the National Child Care Strategy, on the efficient day-to-day operation of CSP services, and on priorities in respect to the National Program Support Strategy for sponsors, management committees and staff employed in CSP child-care services. Advice from the State and Territory planning committees was to be the primary source of information for advice given on the NCCS.

This advisory body was replaced in March 1991, after the 1990 election, with the National Children's Services Advisory Council (NCSAC). The differences between the previous body and the NCSAC was that the latter was smaller, included representatives from the commercial child-care sector, and was now responsible to the Minister who assumed responsibility for the new Health and Community Services portfolio. According to Wangmann (1995), the inclusion of the private sector, in addition to the extension of the Childcare Assistance to commercially operated child-care centres in January 1991, was a turning point in child-care policy in Australia. The government shifted its orientation away from the public provision of child-care services to publicly supporting private operators and employer-sponsored services. This effectively changed the relationship between the major institutions providing child-care, that is, between the state, the market and the family.

In December 1994 a new advisory body was established to report to the Minister for Family Services who, after the 1993 election, became responsible for Children's Services. The new National Advisory Council on Childcare (NACC) was comprised of a majority of parents who used child-care services. Their role was to provide advice to the government on child-care issues and on the diverse needs of various family types

at different stages of the life cycle. Parental representation in conjunction with a rhetoric of 'choice' justified the government's change in funding policy from one of direct support for the provision of child-care places to one of indirect assistance for families to meet their own child-care needs.

The Ratification of International Conventions and Law Reform

During the 1990s child-care has been the focus of two human rights international declarations and conventions to which the Commonwealth government of Australia became a signatory. In 1990 the United Nations *Convention on the Rights of the Child* (CROC) was signed and in 1991 the *International Labour Organisation Convention 156* (ILO 156) was ratified strengthening the government's commitment to the provision of children's services.

The CROC states that the best interest of the child shall be 'a primary consideration' and that signatories undertake to ensure that children receive the protection and care 'necessary for their well being' via institutions, services and facilities that conform with appropriate standards of health, safety, staffing and supervision. (Law Reform Commission, 1994:8). ILO Convention 156 promotes equality of opportunity for workers with family responsibilities. Under Article 5 signatories are encouraged to

- (a) take account of the needs of workers with family responsibilities in community planning; and (b) to develop or promote community services, public or private, such as child care and family services and facilities. (Law Reform Commission, 1994:8).

ILO Recommendation 165 spells out what signatories to ILO 156 should do in relation to child-care and family services and facilities referred to in ILO 156. That is, to ensure services meet the needs and preferences of the community as revealed by consultation and ensure services comply with appropriate standards.

In 1992, the Commonwealth government instigated a re-evaluation of child-care provision which involved a report by the Law Reform Commission on the Child Care Act 1972 administered by the (then) Commonwealth Department of Health, Housing and Community Services. The report, complete with recommendations for legislative reform, was released in August 1994.

It was noted in the report that the Commonwealth's social justice strategy contained four social justice principles related to child-care: access, equity, affordability and quality. These principles accompanied the Australian government's human rights obligations and aim to ensure that all people have equal access to affordable, high

quality services funded and administered by the Commonwealth. According to the Law Reform Commission, the Children's Service Program (CSP) reflects these principles and the Commonwealth's human rights obligations only 'to a degree', noting that there is scope for the CSP to reflect social justice and human rights principles more effectively. It was pointed out that:

[t]here are problems with the availability of services for children lower down on the priority of access scale. There is also no effective and consistent means to ensure compliance with priority of access guidelines. There are inequalities in funding between various service types, including different entitlements to Childcare Assistance for parents using different service types. (1994:8)

In order to overcome these inadequacies, the Commission identified a number of heads of constitutional power that would support child-care legislation including 'the appropriations power,¹¹ the power to make grants to the States,¹² the Territories power,¹³ and the social welfare power¹⁴ (1994:8). However, it was suggested that

[t]he constitutional power that would support the most comprehensive legislation is the external affairs power ¹⁵... under an international agreement, convention or treaty. ... ILO Convention 156 and ILO Recommendation 165 would provide the basis for the Commonwealth to make laws about the provision of child care services for workers with family responsibilities. (1994:8-9)

Further, the Law Reform Commission noted that the Commonwealth's CSP is only one aspect of a range of family and other children's services and recommended that 'the Commonwealth establish a national agency to coordinate government policy affecting children and to monitor the implementation of programs, policies and laws to ensure that the rights and interests of children are protected and promoted' (1994:11). Indeed, a national focus was considered to be vital to ensure that 'the needs of children are identified and met and their rights and interests protected on a comprehensive, systematic and nationally consistent basis' (Law Reform Commission, 1994:11).

Before losing office in 1996, the Labor government had not acted on any of the Law Reform Commissions recommendations to change or amend the Child Care Act of 1972. The Coalition, in its election child-care policy, indicated that it had no intention of doing so. Instead, the Coalition expressed concern over the Law Reform

¹¹ Constitution s81.

¹² Constitution s96.

¹³ Constitution s122.

¹⁴ Constitution s51 (xxxiiiA).

¹⁵ Constitution s51 (xxxiv).

Commission's recommendations:

We believe that legislation of this kind would only intensify uncertainty amongst child care providers and inevitably reduce growth and confidence in the children's services sector. Accordingly the Coalition will not proceed along this path. (Liberal/National Party 1996:11).

The orientation of the Liberal Government to the needs of child-care providers and its reliance on the private sector to provide formal child-care spaces was apparent.

Policies of The Liberal/National Parties

In 1996 the Liberal and National Parties formed a Coalition Government after thirteen years of Labor in power. Traditionally, the Coalition parties have assigned child-care a much lower priority than has Labor. The new Government's child-care policies were in keeping with its 'back to family values' stance, similar to that promoted by the Fraser Government in the late 1970s. The Fraser government (1975-1983) was committed, for economic and ideological reasons, 'to significant reductions in public expenditure and to a return to 'traditional' family values' (Brennan, 1994:9). That meant substantial reductions in the child-care budget (30 per cent lower in 1981-82 than in Labor's peak year 1975-76 (Brennan & O'Donnell, 1986:39), and the possibility that commonwealth-funded child-care services would be dismantled or a major transfer of responsibilities to the states or to private enterprise would ensue. The latter two courses of action were canvassed though neither occurred (Brennan, 1994:99). Now, the Howard Government is providing indications of similar possibilities, in the long term.

During the 1984 election campaign the Liberal / National parties proposed a 'family tax package' and a pilot study into the extension of fee relief to users of commercial centres. This was presented instead of an attempt to try to match the Labor government's commitment to create an addition 20,000 child-care places over the following three years at a cost of \$100 million. Similar to the current Coalition governments 'family tax package', the 1984 proposal was aimed at increasing the resources available to families with children via tax rebates for child-care expenses and the introduction of income splitting (Brennan, 1994:176).

Little was made of child-care by the Coalition until the 1993 election. At that time, the Coalition joined Labor in portraying child-care as central to its overall social and economic goals and made a major commitment to increase the number of operational child-care places by the year 2001. The Coalition's target of 360,000 places, 6000 more than that estimated by Labor, was not, however, tied to any particular plan of

action and its level of funding for new services was well below that budgeted by Labor. 'Presumably the Coalition's assumption was that commercial operators and employers would be responsible for establishing most of the new services' (Brennan, 1994:212), and that they would do so without the assistance of capital subsidies or interest free loans, as offered by Labor.

The proposals for child-care presented by the Coalition in 1993 were, for the most part, offered again in 1996. To address the high costs of child-care the Coalition offered a mean-tested cash rebate to parents in 1993; in 1996, it promised to maintain the non-means-tested Childcare Cash Rebate introduced by Labor in 1994. In 1993 the Liberal and National Parties promised to introduce a common level of fee relief for all forms of care presenting 'affordable quality child care' as 'a basic right of all parents' (Liberal and National Parties, 1993:2). In 1996, they promised to maintain the existing system of Childcare Assistance¹⁶ without adopting Labor's proposed limit of 12 hours of formal care for parents not in the paid workforce. Along with its Family Tax Package, these measures were aimed at ensuring that 'all parents have fair and equitable access to affordable, flexible and high quality care options regardless of whether they choose to participate in the paid workforce or to care for their children at home' (Liberal and National Parties, 1996: 3). Thus adopting a rhetoric of choice and emphasising the needs of children as well as the needs of parents, the Coalition presented its policy as more equitable, efficient and less discriminatory than that being put forward by the Labor government. Further, the Liberal and National Parties stated in their 1996 child-care policy platform that they would: develop a National Planning Framework; review the Fringe Benefits Tax; maintain, review, and extend accreditation and quality assurance in the industry; develop a national strategy to meet the information requirements of parents and providers; strengthen priority of access guidelines to ensure priority for children at risk of abuse or neglect; and provide a 'one-stop-shop' for the provision of services and support for parents. These commitments, in addition to those already discussed, were made in keeping with the Coalition's privatisation and deregulation orientation, and alongside criticism of the Labor government's approach to child-care provision as being 'chaotic, bureaucratic, uncoordinated and over-regulated' (Liberal and National Parties, 1996:4), and thus discouraging for

¹⁶ In 1996, the Liberal and National Parties noted that 'Childcare Assistance has been a vital payment enabling lower income families to access the child care they need. Its extension to private child care has greatly facilitated the growth of that sector and the expansion of child care provision' (1996:7).

private/employer providers.

The Coalition came to power with a 'Family Tax Package' which would 'put the needs of families at the centre of national policy-making ... and ... give them more genuine choices about how they live' (Liberal and National Parties, 1996:4), and with a promise to maintain much of Labor's child-care initiatives implemented during its thirteen years in office. The latter commitment, however, was broken by the Howard government's first Budget¹⁷ and has been contradicted by the Coalition's push to give the States more responsibility for child-care (along with health, housing and education) and its plan to 'broad-band' specific purpose grants, that are less directly tied to specific policy initiatives and designed to give the States more flexibility and control over programs while reducing Commonwealth interference in their administration (AFR, 5/11/96). This resembles the approach taken by federal governments in Canada during the 1990s.

The Howard government's child-care initiatives were criticised by representatives of the various segments of the child-care industry. Numerous comments resembled criticisms laid against the recommendations of the Economic Planning Advisory Commission (EPAC) Child Care Task Force presented a month earlier in its Interim Report. The government's initiatives and the Task Force's recommendations both represented a significant attack on middle-class occupational welfare. Emphasising choice and efficiency, the EPAC report offered the government a convenient excuse to begin overhauling the system and to break its election commitment to retain, unchanged, the fee relief and the non-means-tested cash rebate (Australian, 25/7/96; Age, 27/7/96), even though the Task Force warned against 'more tinkering with the current system' (AFR, 28/8/96). Rather than wait for the Task Force's final report, the Howard government implemented the above measures piecemeal, in a Budget deficit-driven approach, and without linking them to other initiatives, which taken together as a 'package of measures' was designed to deliver high quality, better targeted and affordable child-care (AFR, 28/8/96).

The Economic Planning Advisory Council (EPAC) Child Care Task Force Report

In 1995 the (then) Labor government established an Economic Planning Advisory Commission Child Care Task Force, commissioning it to generate information and

¹⁷ See Chapter VII for details.

report on 'the nature of the child care system required to meet the needs of children, their families and society into the twenty-first century' (EPAC CCTF, 1996:ix). The purpose of the report was to assist governments to plan for Australia's medium to long term child-care needs, and to make the necessary changes to child-care policy. The brief required that the Task Force investigate future demand and provision for child-care and the links between the service delivery of child-care and other children's and family services. In June 1996, the new Coalition government requested that the role of Fringe Benefits Tax concessions also be included.

The Task Force drew on primary and secondary material in its process of information gathering. The generation of primary data through consultations, written submissions and focus groups¹⁸ shows that the information gathering process was open to the numerous and conflicting interest groups or collective identities involved in the child-care industry. According to the Terms of Reference, reports prepared by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG)¹⁹, The Australian Law Reform Commission²⁰, the Australian National Audit Office (ANAO)²¹, and the National Council for the International Year of the Family²² were to be referred to with regard to important background information on pertinent legislative, economic and social issues. The Task Force also commissioned six papers, which presented diverse and, on some issues, conflicting views²³.

This study of the child-care industry found that the structures that had developed to accommodate the rapid expansion in demand for child-care over the past two decades

¹⁸ Consultations, written submissions, and focus groups involving industry representatives, researchers, analysts, parents using child-care services and other interested persons were undertaken prior to and after the release of an Interim Report in July 1996. The information gathering process was aided by the establishment of a dedicated phone line with a toll free number to record people's responses to the Interim Report and to an earlier issues paper.

¹⁹ The COAG review did not address longer term funding and regulatory issues.

²⁰ The recommendations of the Report *Child Care for Kids* was discussed earlier in this chapter.

²¹ Auditor-General (1994). *Mind the Children: The Management of Children's Services*, Audit Report No. 42., 1993-94. Australian Government Publishing Service: Canberra

²² NCIYF (1994). *Creating the Links: Families and Social Responsibilities*. Canberra: AGPS. This was based, in part, on a discussion paper released by the NCIYF in March 1994 titled *The Heart of the Matter: Families at the Centre of Public Policy*.

²³ Topics covered by the commissioned papers included: industrial relations issues (Australian Centre For Industrial Relations Research and Training, 1996; Curtain, 1996); the funding of future child-care provision in Australia (Abelson and Jones, 1996); the future of children's services in Australia (Cox, 1996); the distributional impacts of alternative child-care subsidy policies (National Centre For Social And Economic Modeling (NATSEM), 1996); and children's services in other countries (Pettit and Wangmann, 1996).

were 'unlikely to be able to provide the integration and flexibility of services that is required for the future' (EPAC, 1996:xi). The Task Force argued that although the availability and standard of child-care in Australia compares well with other countries, the speed of growth has resulted in inefficiencies and inequities (EPAC, 1996). It was observed that the current system was characterised by complex regulatory and financial support arrangements, segmented sectors (for example, the preschool and child-care sectors, the community and private sectors), a patchwork of services, inconsistencies amongst care types and subsidies, inequality in the provision of care with oversupply in some areas and under supply in other areas, poor targeting of assistance (much of the funding going directly or indirectly to upper income families), and questionable quality of care in sectors without regulations and/or quality assurance. The Task Force stressed that almost no-one making a submission wanted the status quo.

The approach taken by the Task Force was to map out a policy framework for a 'simpler, more responsive, efficient and flexible child care system' (EPAC 1996:xii) that could deliver affordable, quality, accredited care to all children and families across the nation, and be responsive to the changing needs of working parents and to community expectations. To promote these objectives it was suggested that government policies be premised on the effective targeting of financial support, policy simplicity and consistency with an emphasis on outcomes, and on the good use of market mechanisms (EPAC, 1996:xv). While the focus of the report was on paid care, the Task Force's proposals also aimed to enhance the ability of parents to make choices about the type of care arrangements they preferred. Thus, the Task Force presented forty-four recommendations covering affordable child-care, quality child-care, support for a quality child-care sector, and Fringe Benefit Tax and employee child-care expenses as well as two recommendations on the principles and objectives for child-care policy outlined above.

The main recommendation for ensuring affordable child-care was the development of a new Child Care Benefit that would replace all existing forms of subsidies. The proposed Child Care Benefit would be a means-tested payment, made by way of a smart card system as a percentage of the costs of care on a per capita basis, payable to parents using all forms of eligible non-parental care²⁴. In addition, a special funding

²⁴ Recommendations 3 - 15. (EPAC, 1996: xv-xvii)

pool, comprised of both Commonwealth and State funds and to be administered by the States, was recommended for the provision of child-care for special needs children²⁵.

With regard to ensuring quality child-care, the Task Force recommended that the current system of State licensing and Commonwealth quality accreditation be improved, extended to all providers of paid child-care, and considered a necessary pre-requisite for attracting the proposed Child Care Benefit²⁶. This would entail the development of uniform regulations across the States and require all staff providing accredited child-care services to have appropriate post-school qualifications. Further, it was envisaged that the Commonwealth, in co-operation with State and Territory governments, support a quality child-care sector²⁷ with the creation and funding of a single national council²⁸ and ensure that priority is given to the continued growth in the provision of education and training for child-care workers, that industrial awards, agreements and legislation are monitored and reviewed, and that family-friendly workplace policies and practices are promoted. It was also recommended that Fringe Benefits Tax exemptions be continued for employer contributions for reserved child-care places and for other capital contributions, but abolished for salary sacrifice arrangements²⁹.

Responses to the Interim Report were taken into consideration by the Task Force when writing the Final Report. There was widespread agreement for improving the current system with general support for reducing the complexity in funding and administrative arrangements and putting more emphasis on the developmental needs of children. However, there were widely divergent views on how this could be achieved, differing, to a large extent, by industry segment, which demonstrates the various conflicting interests and identities of those involved in the industry. For example, those in the private sector tended to support the replacement of existing subsidies with the proposed Child Care Benefit, whereas

community interests (and some academics such as Eva Cox and June Wangmann) saw significant benefits for quality of care, promoting parental involvement and generating a greater sense of community, from retaining and expanding the direct

²⁵ Recommendations 16 - 18 (EPAC, 1996: xvii)

²⁶ Recommendations 19 - 30 (EPAC, 1996: xvii - xviii)

²⁷ Recommendations 31 - 41 (EPAC, 1996: xviii - xix)

²⁸ The proposed National Child Care Council was designed to provide a representative forum for the industry and a national focus for policy related research.

²⁹ Recommendations 42 - 46 (EPAC, 1996: xix)

subsidisation of community-based care. ... They claimed that the Interim Report over emphasised the benefits of parents being funded directly, and that its emphasis on market-driven choice overlooked the special benefits of community-based-care. ... Some went on to argue that the emphasis on parental choice in the proposed funding mechanism would lead many families to shift into poorer quality care. (EPAC, 1996:6).

Some commentators saw the virtues of the report as to make 'simpler and easier the transfer of government funds', to make the system 'more equitable', make possible the removal of 'a lot of bureaucracy and paper work', and to 'lift government involvement in child care out of the clutches of femocrats and warring vested interests within the industry and deliver it into the hands of ... parents' (Ross Gittens, SMH, 31/7/96). Others warned that the idea of 'parent power' is 'limited in practice due to the vagaries of the market place' (Adele Horin, SMH, 10/8/96):

EPAC's proposal would work only with a huge injection of funds as a massive reduction in subsidies to people who use formal care, or if a much harsher means test were applied ruling out many families from receiving assistance with child care costs. ... Parent power sounds good in theory but there is a cost of unraveling Australia's high quality child-care system and the burgeoning of the unsupervised child-care sector. It could mean the beginning of the end for FDC and OSHC, both depending heavily on government funds and made unviable by too high fees. It could mean LDC becoming the prerogative of the rich. (Adele Horin, SMH, 10/8/96)

Indeed, representatives of the Family Day Care (FDC) and Outside School Hours Care (OSHC) sectors feared that the government would further finance some of the family tax breaks by cutting operational and capital subsidies from their services as it did from community-based Long Day Care (LDC). They dreaded that this would mean 'going back twenty to thirty years to latch-key kids'³⁰ and that 'family day carers would become like other unsupervised private child minders'³¹ (SMH, 9/8/96).

The Interim Report was also criticised by the ACTU and ACOSS for not paying sufficient attention to issues such as the need for effective planning, the conditions of child-care workers, and the delivery of services unlikely to be provided by the commercial sector (i.e., care for babies and toddlers and 'special needs' children). In response, the Task Force emphasised in the Final Report the proposed links between government financial assistance and requirements for quality assurance, and changed some of the Interim Report recommendations concerning assistance for children with special needs, hour entitlements to subsidised care, the treatment of pre-schools, the

³⁰ A comment by Ms Robyn Monro-Miller of the National OSH Services Association as reported.

³¹ A comment by Ms Jo Comans of the National FDC Council as reported.

qualification requirements for child-care workers, and certain transitional matters. Indeed, issues of quality and equity were raised by the Task Force and brought up in the responses to the Interim and Final reports. The question of 'equity' was connected to matters of availability, affordability and access to child-care places³² and to eligibility for assistance³³, while concern over quality care³⁴ was linked to industrial-relations issues, regulation, and auspice. These issues have also featured prominently this decade in debates on child-care in Canada, as demonstrated in the next section of this chapter.

Since the release of the Interim Report of the EPAC Task Force, the Howard Government has presented two more budgets, a discussion paper on the development of a National Planning Framework for child-care, and a report detailing the key findings of The National School Age Care (NSAC) Pilot and Research Program. The budgets are discussed in more detail in Chapter VI with relation to government funding for child-care provision and assistance. However, both Budgets, aimed at reducing government funding, were more tightly targeted toward assisting low- and middle-income families meet their child-care needs and help parents participate in the work force 'should they choose to do so' (Budget Speech, 13/5/97). The Coalition's National Planning Framework articulates 'the Government's vision for delivering a sustainable child care system that provides accessible, affordable and high quality care' (Commonwealth of Australia, 1996x:1). This is deliberated in Chapter VIII with reference to the development of a national child-care system.

In 1997 a report by the Department of Health and Family Services on the key findings on the national school age care pilot study and research program claimed that '[o]utside school hours care is a major priority for the Commonwealth Government' (Commonwealth of Australia, 1997). The pilot study, allocated \$5.8 million in 1995 by the (then) Labor Government, was commissioned to respond to 'concerns about affordability of care for families and the sustainability of the outside school hours care sector'³⁵ (Commonwealth of Australia, 1997:1.2). Research found that families used both formal and informal care for children 0-5 years of age, with low and middle

³² Discussed in detail in Chapter VI.

³³ See Chapter VII.

³⁴ Discussed in Chapter VIII.

³⁵ These concerns were raised in the 1994 Auditor-General's report *Mind The Children : Management of the Children's Services Program*, and the 1994 Australian Law Reform Commission report, *Child Care for Kids*, and confirmed in the EPAC Task Force on Child Care Report.

income families often having difficulty meeting their combined child-care costs. Four funding models were trialed to measure responsiveness to family needs, affordability and effect on service delivery. Access to Childcare Assistance was found to be a very important factor in attracting families to pilot services and in continuing to use care. Not surprisingly, the Research Program found that the key issues for Outside School Hours Care were similar to those for other child-care services: affordability, equity in Government assistance, service quality and service viability.

The most recent move by the Howard government has been to appoint a 12 person National Childcare Advisory Council to conduct an inquiry into charging practices at child-care centres (SMH, 18/9/97). The inquiry is to help the government set up a new system that will give more control over fees to the government. One option under consideration is to pay the centres per hour or per session rather than on a daily basis, at least until 1999 when the Government will issue parents with child-care smart cards, as recommended by the EPAC Task Force, so they can claim fee relief in arrears. The need for the change, the Government claims, is that some centres are overcharging parents while others were attracting maximum government subsidies for places that remained unused. This situation is blamed on the previous Labor government. The extension of fee relief to the private sector in 1991 triggered an unplanned and unchecked boom in child-care centres which provided opportunities for such abuses of the system.

The fiscally driven Liberal government also blames Labor for what it perceives to have been a 'blow out' in the child-care budget. Indeed, a major priority of the Howard government is to 'establish a strategic direction for the long term sustainability of the child care sector' which includes the stemming of 'the ad hoc development of child care services' and the preparation of 'a coherent national framework'³⁶ (Liberal/National Party, 1996b:1). Indeed, cost containment undermines the Howard government's strategy to 'deliver equitable, affordable, flexible and high quality child care to Australian families' (Liberal/National Party, 1996b:2) and hence keep its commitment to provide 'assistance to low and middle-income families so that they can obtain affordable child care and parents can participate in the work force should they choose to do so' (DHFS, 1997a). However, as the Canadian experience attests, the

³⁶ *Budget 1996/97 : Child Care Budget Initiatives* presented by Judi Moylan, Minister for Family Services, (DHFS, 1997a, 1997b, 1997c, 1997d)

Coalition's fiscal objectives³⁷ will ultimately constrain its efforts to ensure that child-care services in Australia are accessible, flexible, equitable, and, in particular, of high quality, objectives which it recognises are 'vital to the healthy development of children and to maintaining employment opportunities for parents' (Liberal/National Party, 1996b:2).

Australian Child-Care Policy in the 1990s. A Summary

As the discussion in this section has demonstrated, the emphasis of child-care policies of both major political parties in Australia has been on the need for work-related child-care. The needs of all children, espoused in the political rhetoric, are subjugated, in policy, by the employment needs of parents and the economic needs of the country. The financial commitment of federal governments to the provision of formal child-care in Australia has, however, in conjunction with other policies such as affirmative action, equal employment opportunity and anti-discrimination, effectively promoted what Esping-Andersen (1990) would term the 'commodification of women's labour' (Bryson, 1995).

The federal government has been instrumental in the expansion of formal child-care services in Australia. In particular, the Labor government recognised the economic benefits of investing in child-care and implemented a number of initiatives that have solidified the foundation for what could become a comprehensive child-care system³⁸. A national child-care strategy was developed and extended, a national system of quality assurance and accreditation was devised, a national child-care advisory body was establishment, and numerous studies and reports were commissioned to examine the situation of child-care in Australia. The Labor government, however, fell shy of making any substantive legislative changes, such as those recommended by the Law Reform Commission, that would extend federal responsibility to the coordination of government policy affecting all children and to the monitoring of policies, programs and laws to ensure that the rights and interests of all children are promoted and protected.

The Liberal Coalition reiterated the Labor party's commitment to promoting quality child-care in Australia in its 1996 election platform. The first Coalition Budget,

³⁷ These objectives include the repaying of \$5 billion of debt to reduce the 1995-96 \$10.3 billion deficit and to reach a surplus in 1998-99 (Treasurer Peter Costello, Budget Speech, 13/5/97).

³⁸ The characteristics of a comprehensive national child-care system are discussed in Chapter 8.

however, delivered a substantial cut to federal child-care spending. This was followed by a second paring of the child-care budget in 1997/98, despite recommendations by the EPAC Child Care Task Force, embraced in part by the Howard government, that would require a significant increase in expenditure. Assistance for child-care in Australia is subsequently becoming a more narrowly focused, workforce-oriented program.

Canadian Child-Care Policy

Throughout the late 1980s and the early 1990s, a fierce debate raged across Canada over child-care. Proponents argued that the federal government should increase funding for public day care and in-home services to help working parents. Opponents insisted that parents should look after their own children or pay for child-care services themselves. Caught in the middle were 'the major political parties, all of which, at one time or another, have supported a national day care program' (Macleans, 31/5/93). In February 1992, the Mulroney government reneged for the second time on an eight year promise to create a national child-care programme³⁹. Prospects for a national child-care policy had all but vanished.

Indeed, in the first half of the 1990s, the child care situation has deteriorated. As the recession and the conservative agenda have influenced Canadian governments, the modest gains made in child care programs and policy through the 1980s have been eroded, and even reversed, in most regions of Canada. (Friendly & Oloman, 1995:2).

In this section, changes in child-care policy in Canada at both the federal and provincial level are traced throughout the early 1990s to the present. First, the legacy of the Mulroney government is reviewed, focusing on the failure of its second attempt to enact a national child-care program. This is followed by an illustration of the increasing vulnerability of the provision of child-care services to a change of government at the provincial level; the case of shifting directions in child-care policy in Ontario provides an example. Finally, the discussion returns to the federal level to examine the Liberal Party's 'Red Book' of election promises, its record of achievement, and subsequently, child-care's open-and-shut window of opportunity. Throughout the discussion I draw out the similarities and differences with the Australian situation arguing that, regardless of political ideology, governments in Australia and Canada

³⁹ The federal government did, however, create a Child Care Special Initiatives Fund worth \$100 million over 7 years, which began on April 1, 1988.

prefer to limit their involvement in child-care to the provision of financial support for parents in paid employment.

Child-Care Policies of the Progressive Conservative Party: The Mulroney Legacy

During the early 1990s, provincial and federal governments were facing hard economic times, with bulging deficits and voter opposition to increased government spending. By 1992 the annual growth rate of day care spaces in Canada had dropped to 2.9 per cent, down from 7.6 per cent the previous year and well below the 10 to 23 per cent maintained throughout the 1980s (Friendly & Oloman, 1995). Some commentators claimed that governments were exaggerating the seriousness of the deficits so they could back out of commitments to social policy (Macleans, 31/5/93). Indeed, the Mulroney government blamed the deficit for its 1992 decision to put on the back burner its national day care program, which would cost anywhere between \$4 to \$12 billion. Nonetheless, six months later the government committed \$4.4 billion over 12 years to buy 50 new helicopters and did so in spite of most Canadians preferring that tax payers money be spent on child-care rather than on defense weaponry (Macleans, 31/5/93). More recently, the Australian Coalition government has focused attention on the deficit (less severe than it was in Canada) in justification for cuts to the child-care budget.

To demonstrate its concern for children, the government announced, instead of a national child-care strategy, the 'Brighter Futures Initiative', a program focused on combating child abuse and helping children at risk. This decision was justified by private opinion polls and six 'focus group' sessions with 'ordinary Canadians' who were more worried about children who are undernourished, poorly housed, often neglected and sometimes abused than they were about day care (Heitlinger, 1993). Among other things, the program involved the abolition of the family allowance, the refundable Child Tax Credit, and the non-refundable Dependent Child Credit, replacing them with a single monthly Child Benefit. The government did, however, enrich, for the second time, the Child Care Expense Deduction (Courchene, 1994) and increased the Dependent Care Allowance, a daily allowance provided to parents in federal training programs for the purchase of child-care. 'These two market-oriented uses of public funds today constitute the largest part of the federal government's contribution to child care' (Friendly & Oloman, 1995:5).

The shelving of the national child-care program was considered a bitter defeat for the

Canadian Women's Movement who had argued that access to affordable, state sponsored child-care is an effective way for parents with young children to end welfare dependency and poverty. As Heitlinger observed:

The plurality of interests represented within the child care lobby, and the competition for supply-side funding from programmes attempting to combat child poverty and abuse, have made it relatively easy for the federal government to refuse to act on the child care issue. (1993:238)

Further, the Tories, bent on a vision of decentralised, collaborative federalism, the distribution of tax expenditures to individuals so they can select the services they can afford, and correspondingly, a non-systematic market-driven system of child-care (Friendly, 1994; Friendly & Oloman, 1995), continued to present the care of children as an issue about freedom of choice and stressed the importance of tax provisions and of the new program of benefits. Yet '[t]he real world functioning of both the child care subsidy system and the *Income Tax Act* reflect the class, gender and racial oppressions at work within the flawed notion of consumerism as free choice' (Harder, 1992:245). In keeping with its version of a National Day Care Strategy, the Conservative government persisted in ignoring the fact that many parents do not have a choice when it comes to accessing what is best for their children. Moreover, as the situation in Ontario at that time clearly illustrates, 'while parents may desire quality care for their children, it might be beyond their financial means to pay for it' (Teghtsoonian, 1993: 22).

Provincial Governments and Child-Care Provision: The Case of Ontario

Although the federal government in Australia retains its spending powers and has assumed responsibility for child-care, it is possible that in the future a federal government, pressured by economic hardship, may relinquish more powers and responsibilities to the states and territories. The following case study of child-care policy and program development in Ontario is presented to demonstrate the vulnerability of child-care provision in times of fiscal restraint, especially where it is treated as a minor social program, is unlegislated, and completely under the jurisdiction of provincial governments.

In 1990, the Ontario Select Committee on Education recommended that every elementary school should offer day-care facilities. The same year a working paper

prepared by the Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care (OCBCC)⁴⁰ put forward a framework for the provincial government to put public and non-profit child-care services and their development on a sounder footing⁴¹. These reports were welcomed by feminist child-care activists who argued for universal child-care (Ferguson, 1991). Similar recommendations were made by the British Columbian Task Force on Child Care in 1991. This Task Force proposed that the appropriate authorities develop a strategy to expand school involvement in the delivery of on-site child-care⁴² and encouraged the provincial government to lobby the federal government to enact a National Child Care Act providing cost-sharing for capital, operating and administrative costs associated with child-care, and to develop an agenda for discussion at the federal / provincial / territorial level related to federal legislation and policies⁴³ (British Columbian Task Force on Child Care, 1991).

During the late 1980s, a Liberal government, committed to building a comprehensive child-care system 'that would move child-care from a welfare connotation toward one of a public service' (Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services, 1987:1, cited in Friendly, 1994:64), introduced direct operating grants and substantially increased the child-care budget and the supply of non-profit spaces in the province. In 1990, the (then) newly elected National Democratic Party government, vowed to move beyond the Liberals improvements to dramatically reform child-care provision in Ontario. At that time, Ontario's child-care programs and services were described as among the best in North America (Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services, 1992), yet child-care in the province was in crisis. Moreover, Ontario did not have a system of child-care:

Child care is not a funded service; inadequate funding arrangements leave programs in perpetual financial crisis. ... Huge waiting lists for subsidies exist while unsubsidised child care spaces are vacant. ... Appropriate services for many families remain unavailable, especially for families with infants, special needs

⁴⁰ The Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care was founded in 1981 to undertake public education and lobbying activities in Ontario. Its founding document *Day Care Deadline 1990* set as its goal 'the establishment of a universally accessible, publicly-funded, high quality, comprehensive, non-profit child care system in Ontario by the end of the decade' (OCBCC, 1992:1). The 1990 review of child-care in Ontario, reported in the working paper *Child Care in Ontario: Making the Shift to the 1990s*, used as its baseline the Coalition's founding document.

⁴¹ The proposal for a new child-care system was based on a provincial funding arrangement, that is, directly funded via 'annual budgets approved by the provincial government in accordance with provincial guidelines' with cost recovery from parents and other levels of government being 'the responsibility of the provincial government' (OCBCC, 1992:8).

⁴² Recommendation 5, (BCTFCC, 1991:58).

⁴³ Recommendations 7 & 8, (BCTFCC, 1991:59).

children, ... in rural and isolated areas of the province. ... Many regulated child care programs in Ontario fail to meet even minimum provincial standards. ... The average wage of qualified staff is less than 70 per cent of the average industrial wage resulting in high staff turnover, poor quality and ineffective use of human resources. (OCBCC, 1992:1).

This was due, in part, to the lack of both a national and provincial policy on child-care. It was also a consequence of the 1990 capping of transfer payments, under the Canada Assistance Plan (CAP) to the 'wealthy' provinces of British Columbia, Ontario and Alberta, which reduced funds available to assist eligible low income families with their child-care costs and has since forced more day care centres in those provinces to either close or reduce their staff and spaces⁴⁴. Previously, only provincial governments limited spending on child-care (Friendly, 1994:74).

In contrast to the Conservative federal government's 'demand-driven' market oriented, user-pay approach to child-care, the NDP government in Ontario, led by Premier Bob Rae, took note of what the child-care advocates had been saying for years and set about creating a universal child-care system in the province. In 1992, the Rae government released a public consultation paper detailing plans for the reform of child-care in Ontario⁴⁵. The NDP's plan, valued at \$75 million over five years, was to increase the number of universally accessible child-care spaces by 20,000 through highly subsidised public day care centres (Globe & Mail, 31/3/94). Child-care was viewed as 'an essential public service' to promote healthy child development, and as a means for improving women's equal access to and participation in the labour force (Ministry of Community and Social Services, 1992:1). As such, it acknowledged child-care as an economic, social justice and gender equity issue, and was welcomed enthusiastically by child-care advocates. Central to the proposed reform was a new funding arrangement, similar to that proposed in 1990 by the OCBCC, and the participation of parents in the organisation of regulated child-care.

However, in March 1994, with only half of the pledged places operational, the Minister for Social Services vowed to proceed with only 4,000 of the other 10,000 committed

⁴⁴ Between 1991 and 1993, 73 day care centres closed in Ontario. In March 1993, 25,000 children were on waiting lists for subsidised child-care, while an estimated 12,000 to 14,000 full-fee spaces, where costs typically average between \$500 and \$800 a month, remained unfilled, and in Manitoba, the number of subsidised day care spaces was frozen at 9,600 (Macleans, 31/5/96).

⁴⁵ Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services. (1992). *Setting the Stage: A Public Consultation Paper on Child Care Reform in Ontario*. Ministry of Community and Social Services: Toronto.

places, declaring that 'the Ontario government is not going to be able to do all that was planned because of the dollars we don't have' (Globe and Mail, 31/3/1994). The inability of the Rae government to implement a universal child-care system in Ontario was confounded with the election of a Progressive Conservative government, led by Mike Harris, in 1995. With deficit reduction their main priority, the Harris Tories began immediately to slash the budget, drastically reducing transfer payments to the municipalities⁴⁶. Municipalities, in turn, had to cut their budgets. In most cases, this meant less for child-care⁴⁷.

The decline of provincial government involvement in the provision of early childhood education and child-care services in Ontario was set in motion on July 21, 1995 with the Harris government's economic statement. The Government announced it would slash 14,000 *jobsOntario* child-care subsidies unless municipal governments picked up 20% of the cost of the previously 100% provincially funded subsidies⁴⁸. Numerous protests and rallies took place around the province in the days before the announcement, culminating with a day of mourning for child-care in recognition of the devastating impact of the Harris government's first budget⁴⁹.

Early in 1996, the Harris Government was blamed for 'dismantling 15 years of previous government policy and at least two decades of public and expert opinion on child care

⁴⁶ The Harris government cut the entire *jobsOntario* program, froze non-profit housing and cut \$200 million to municipal transportation projects. Social assistance was cut by 21.6% and special assistance ... was cut completely (Network News, 27/7/95).

⁴⁷ Cuts to social service agencies, school boards and post-secondary institutions means the closure of child-care spaces and cuts to child-care resource centres (Network News, 27/7/95).

⁴⁸ Child-care subsidies constitute the largest part of the provincial child-care budget, representing almost two-thirds of all public spending on child-care. These subsidies are cost-shared between municipalities and higher levels of government. Access to provincial funds depends on the agreement by a municipality to pay 20% of the total cost, while access to federal funds by the provinces under the Canada Assistance Plan is determined and matched by the amount the province is willing to contribute. Municipalities are responsible for the allocation of the subsidies, setting eligibility criteria (within wide provincial guidelines) and determining the level of user fees (if any) for subsidised families. In addition to purchasing spaces, on behalf of the families they subsidise (through purchase of service agreements) in community based child-care programs, some municipalities operate their own child-care programs (OCBCC, 1996; Friendly, 1994). Municipal child-care in Ontario is important as it is one of only a few examples of government-operated child-care in Canada and has set a generally high standard for child-care staff wages and benefits (Friendly, 1994:68).

⁴⁹ The cutbacks in Ontario between July 1995 to January 1996 resulted in the closure of 14 child-care programs, the laying off of 77.5 staff, wage cuts imposed on child-care staff in 8 municipalities, a freeze on new families receiving subsidies in 20 municipalities, the introduction or increase of user fees for families receiving subsidies in 11 municipalities, down sizing of programs and/or operations in 18 regions, reduced or canceled purchase of services agreements with community based child-care programs in 3 regions, the cancellation of 18 existing child-care planning groups, and the cancellation of 14 new child-care programs and/or planned expansions (OCBCC, 1996: 3).

... without the benefit of public or legislative debate' (OCBCC, 1996:5). This was after the Throne Speech, in September 1995, in which the Premier indicated that the government had no responsibility for child-care, effectively changing the relationship between the state and families in Ontario. Reiterating the opinion that child-care was the sole responsibility of parents, the Minister of Community and Social Services, David Tsubouchi, was reported to have said 'maybe you have to look back at what we used to do 20 or 30 years ago when your mother had to get out. You maybe just get somebody else to babysit for them' (Toronto Star, 18/9/95). Mr Tsubouchi and other members of the Harris government were assuming that families who can't afford licensed day care have 'relatives, neighbours or friends' who are willing, able and available to provide child-care for them.

Later that year, the social services ministry was proposing to increase 'parental choice' by replacing the fifty year old plus child-care subsidy system with a voucher system (The Child Care Advocacy Association of Canada, 3/11/95). The proposed vouchers, worth half that of subsidies for regulated child-care spaces and paid on behalf of parents to providers, were to be given directly to low income parents so they could purchase regulated or unregulated care. This proposal was criticised for a number of inter-related reasons. First, it assumed that there were scores of women available to provide child-care in their homes. Even if there were women available, few would be willing to provide child-care for the meager cost of the vouchers. Second, by offering what was perceived as a pittance, the government would be publicly devaluing a profession that is primarily represented by female employees. It would portray 'the important task of providing stimulating, educational environments and early intervention opportunities for Ontario's children, including some of the province's most neediest, [a]s worth very little' (OCBCC, 1995:1). Finally, it was seen as a threat to the existence of high quality child care choices in the community because it would undermine the regulated child-care system. In so doing, the Harris government would have 'broken yet another of his Common Sense promises ... Parent Choice for Child Care ... actually attack[ing] middle income and high income families as well as the poor' (OCBCC, 1995:2).

The Ecker Report

In August 1996, the government released the 'Ecker Report'⁵⁰ detailing the findings of an eight month review of child-care in the province. The 'Ecker Report' shared a lot in common with that produced by the EPAC Child Care Task Force on the future of child-care in Australia, released about the same time that year. Both reports proposed a change to the relationship between governments and families with respect to sharing responsibility for child-care. They indicated that the role of government should be as a facilitator of parental choice rather than as a child-care provider, and emphasised policies that support and encourage parents in the role of primary caregiver and aid them in their decision making with regard to that care (Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services, 1996:2).

The Ecker Report proposed that Ontario's child-care system be funded by the cost-sharing of capital funds on a 50/50 basis between the province and child-care providers, private as well as non-profit and community-based operators, and that the province implement a simplified, streamlined, sliding scale income-tested fee subsidy for families most in need. The fee subsidies, to be increased in number, would be applicable to a wider range of programs incorporating unregulated as well as regulated services. Similarly, it was proposed that the licensed home child-care system be redesigned and expanded, and requirements be streamlined. It has been argued that the government's notion of 'streamlining', motivated by cost-cutting, will eventually lead to the exclusion of many low and modest income families from qualifying for full or partial subsidies, and result in the erosion of quality in the day care and regulated home child-care sectors (CRRU, 1996). Indeed, the shift to demand-side subsidisation of child-care in Canada and in Australia appears to have been motivated more by budgetary constraints than by concerns about the efficient delivery of quality child-care. Moreover, demand-side subsidisation lends itself to increasingly tighter eligibility rules which provide a less conspicuous means for governments to further reduce their child-care funding.

Both the EPAC and Ecker reports dealt with balancing work and family responsibilities and industrial-relations issues. The Ecker Report proposed that the government work with and actively encourage the business community to explore an array of strategies

⁵⁰ Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services (1996). *Improving Ontario's Child Care System*. Ministry of Community and Social Services: Toronto.

to help employees balance their work and family responsibilities⁵¹. Industrial relations issues included the raising of the staff-to-child ratios for preschoolers, the acceptance of a broader range of staff qualifications, increasing flexibility in how staff are deployed to work with children throughout the day, increasing the number of school-aged children regulated home care providers are permitted to care for, and the elimination of physical plant requirements. These recommendations, in particular, gave cause for child-care advocates to criticise the Ecker Report for 'attacking the cornerstones of quality care'⁵² (OCBCC, 1996a).

On May 1, 1997, a package was announced by the *Who Does What* (WDW) panel detailing the governments plans to legislate areas of responsibility and cost-sharing arrangements between the province and municipalities for a number of local services. As part of the package the existing discretionary cost-sharing arrangement in which the province contributed 80 percent of child-care subsidy costs and the municipality contributed 20 percent would become mandatory. Accordingly, on August 21, 1997 the *Services Improvement Act* was proposed including the required amendments to the Day Nurseries Act:

Mandatory cost-sharing between the province and municipalities for all child care services beginning January 1, 1998;

Municipal management of the delivery of all child care services;

Amendments that would permit the Minister to designate geographic areas and to designate municipalities or social services administration boards as delivery agents.' (Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services, 1997).

This would mean more access to child-care services for families in need, claimed the ministry of social services (Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services, 1997). However, given the reductions in transfer payments to the municipalities, which are already over-stretching their budgets, it is hard to see how mandatory cost-sharing and passing the responsibility for the provision of child-care onto the municipalities could achieve this goal. Moreover, at the same time as the government espoused that child-care 'would be delivered at the local level by delivery agents within comprehensive provincial standards', it was making it increasingly difficult for the municipalities to do

⁵¹ The Canadian Federal Government has not ratified ILO Conventions 156 and 165 which promote equality of opportunity for workers with family responsibilities. Canada is, however, a signatory of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) which binds signatories to undertakings aimed at ensuring that all children receive care necessary for their wellbeing.

⁵² The 'cornerstones of quality care' are given as 'standards and monitoring, good staff through training, adequate wages and working conditions and accountability for public funding' (OCBCC, 1996:1).

so⁵³.

This was another example of 'buck-passing' between levels of government. The first was the devolution of responsibilities for child-care and other social programs by the federal government to the provinces in the form of the new Canada Health and Social Transfer. In the same way that the EPAC Report inadvertently lent support to the changes in Australian child-care policy made by the Howard government, the Ecker Report offered some justification for the Harris Government's actions on child-care. The Harris Government pre-empted some of the report's recommendations and has since implemented others.

Both reports acknowledged the importance of quality child-care, though the quality related industrial-relations issues (discussed in Chapter VIII) were overshadowed by economic concerns. Consequently, the recommendations picked up by the receiving governments have been those that align with a demand-driven approach to the provision of child-care, which coincide with those that have been criticised as detrimental to high quality care. This market oriented approach to social policy, which is dominant among conservative governments (as seen at the provincial level in Ontario and at the federal level in Australia), is reflected in the directions being taken by the federal Liberal Party, elected to govern Canada in 1993 (Friendly & Oloman, 1995).

The Liberal Party's 'Red Book' of Commitments

Child-care featured as an election issue in the 1993 federal election. This election was 'the first to place child-care within an economic context' at the federal level, 'with the Liberals and the New Democrats identifying its potential in supporting both parental employment and job creation' (Friendly & Oloman, 1995:7). While the Conservatives indicated that they would have to study the country's resources before promising any new programs, the NDP argued that '[c]hild care is basic; it is the vehicle that will allow low-income people to get out of the poverty trap' (Macleans, 31/5/93). The Liberal Party declared that

Canadians with young families need a support system that enables parents to

⁵³ On November 29, 1995 the provincial government announced a 47% cut to municipal transfer payments over the next two years - 23% the first year and 24% the second year. This cut to unconditional grants has placed up to 50% of the province's 71,000 child-care subsidies in jeopardy (Network News, 6/12/95).

participate fully in the economic life of the community. That is why the availability of quality child care is an economic issue (Liberal Party of Canada, 1993:38)

The Liberal Party won a majority government under the leadership of Jean Chrétien with the 'Red Book' (formally titled *Creating Opportunity: The Liberal Plan for Canada*) holding them accountable for their commitments. With respect to child-care it was promised that

A Liberal government, if it can obtain the agreement of the provinces, will be committed to expanding existing child care in Canada by 50,000 new quality child care spaces in each year that follows a year of 3 percent economic growth, up to a total of 150,000 new spaces. (Liberal Party of Canada, 1993:40)

The government pledged \$720 million to create these child-care spaces over three years. Further, the Liberals declared that they supported 'the principal of basing fees on the parents' ability to pay' and would 'create genuine choices for parents ... through the development of regulated child care alternatives' (Liberal Party of Canada, 1993:38). The rhetoric of choice, assuming that all families have child-care options and are in a position to choose among them, was again invoked. The concept of 'quality' appeared to be inherently connected to the need for 'regulated' child-care spaces. Child-care advocates thus anticipated meaningful improvements in child-care policy as 'it seemed that these commitments had implications for the future design of child care funding arrangements' (Friendly & Oloman, 1995:8).

1994 was a year in which economic growth was recorded at over 3 percent. Accordingly, the Chrétien government made a proposal to the provincial governments, similar to that put to the Australian states by the Labor federal government in 1992, to cost-share an investment in improving the supply of child-care. In October 1995, one year behind schedule, Lloyd Axworthy, Minister for Human Resources and Development, was reported to have indicated that a proposal to create more child-care spaces would be ready within a month (*The Gazette*, 18/10/95). As was the case with the Australian states in 1992, the Canadian provinces, in particular Ontario, had shown little interest in discussing a cost-sharing deal. The provinces were especially reluctant to enter into a cost-sharing arrangement for child-care given that the federal budgets in 1994 and, particularly, in 1995 drastically cut transfer payments to the provinces⁵⁴. More importantly, the 1995 budget brought profound changes to social policy in Canada, going far beyond that which had been discussed under the guise of the Social

⁵⁴ '[E]ven before an examination of the best ways to reform social programs took place, the 1994 budget established savings goals for the Social Security Review' (Friendly & Oloman, 1995:8).

Security Review. The report of the review was released immediately prior to the budget.

The Social Security Review

A major review of social programs was announced by the Liberal government soon after it assumed power in 1993. A primary motivation for social program reform was cost-saving. The discussion paper *'Agenda: Jobs and Growth. Improving Social Security in Canada'*, was released in October 1994. It identified child-care 'as a priority' for the federal government, 'lying at the heart' of 'working, learning and security', the three areas addressed in the paper (Government of Canada, 1994:53).

Child-care was presented as:

a critical support for employment, because it provides working parents with the assurance of quality care for their children. But child care is more than employment if it also provides children with a good environment in which to grow and learn. Effective child care can help to ensure the future employment success of children who might otherwise be at risk. (Government of Canada, 1994:53)

The federal government noted that it needed to come to some agreement with the provinces on how the pledged \$720 million (\$360 million set aside in the February 1994 budget) would be spent. Accepting child-care as a provincial responsibility, the federal government hinted at its pursuit of a national framework for child-care. Indeed, in a supplementary paper⁵⁵ the federal government reaffirmed its 'Red Book' commitment to do so, suggesting that 'a vision for child care and development across Canada should address the common themes of quality, availability, affordability, and comprehensiveness' and incorporate a 'framework of principles to guide and consolidate investments in child care and development' (Government of Canada, 1994b:2; cited in Friendly & Oloman, 1995:8). These investments, it was claimed, will 'pay multiple dividends in the future from a more productive work force, jobs for child care workers, reduced pressure on overburdened income support programs, and enhanced development of children' (Government of Canada, 1994:53).

The Social Security Review was seen by the child-care advocacy community as an opportunity to reinforce the need for a national child care program. This was encouraged by the fact that child-care was identified as pivotal by numerous and diverse groups speaking at hearings of the Standing Committee on Human Resources Development held throughout the country. They 'all spoke about the importance of treating child care as an integral component of social security

⁵⁵ *Child care and development. A supplementary paper.* Human Resources Development: Ottawa, ON.

reform'⁵⁶ (Friendly & Oloman, 1995:9).

In January 1995, the Standing Committee on Human Resources Development released their report on Social Security Reform. It was noted, in the section on child-care, that many 'witnesses' who appeared before the Committee

... expressed concern that the Discussion Paper fell short of advocating and endorsing the implementation of an overall national child care program. ... In their view, moving toward a more dedicated funding approach was necessary for the future. [Moreover]... witnesses emphasized the need to deal with child care more comprehensively ... [and] criteria such as affordability, quality, availability, and accountability remain important in the context of child care reform. ... (House of Commons, 1995a:27-28)

A 'few notable exceptions' opposed the implementation of a coordinated national approach to child-care. These commentators, who were not identified in the report (some witnesses were quoted), emphasised familial responsibility for the care of children and argued that it would be more equitable if 'federal child care dollars [were] directed in the form of tax credits to families, which would then make their own child care choices' (House of Commons, 1995a:29). They also 'asserted that imposing a national program with attached standards might undermine the informal child care arrangements that some families have with neighbours, friends, or relatives' (House of Commons, 1995a:30). The rhetoric of choice was again invoked, this time aligned with the notion of equity, in an effort to reduce or at least restrict the involvement of the government in the provision of publicly funded formal child-care services.

Seven recommendations were made with respect to child-care initiatives. The first emphasised the importance of the federal government discussing with the provinces and territories the need for a more coordinated approach to child-care. The next four proposals reaffirmed this, recommending 'the establishment of standards appropriate to high quality child care and attuned to early childhood development needs', the proper valuing of the work of child-care workers and the improvement of their access to educational opportunities, that 'the quality and integration of child care delivery be considered at the same time as governments plan increases in the number of spaces

⁵⁶ The groups mentioned included the National Crime Prevention Council, the Canadian Federation of Agriculture, the National Transportation Workers Union of Canada, Canadian Labour Force Development Board, Canadian Housing Renewal Association, Canadian Federation of Municipalities, Canadian Institute of Child Health, National Youth in Care Network, and many more - as well as the labour and women's movements, aboriginal organizations and anti-poverty groups.

available', and that 'commitments to increased child care funding serve as the groundwork for establishing a strengthened and improved child care system in Canada' (House of Commons, 1995a:74). The final two recommendations endorsed the federal government's commitments to financing child-care services for children with special needs, including Aboriginal children and children with disabilities.

The Canada Health and Social Transfer

The federal government delivered its second budget in late January 1995. Despite being the most prominent social pledge of the Liberals 1993 election campaign, there were no signs of a national child-care program on the federal government's agenda (Globe and Mail, 1/2/95). Moreover, this Budget indicated that the Canadian federal government, unlike its Australian counterpart, was further relinquishing what little power it had to encourage provinces to invest in child-care (CCAAC, 1995). It was announced that the Canada Assistance Plan (CAP) would be replaced with the Canada Health and Social Transfer (CHST), a block funding structure of provincial transfers as per Bill 76. While CAP guaranteed funds for regulated child-care under a cost-sharing agreement, the CHST would give provinces full discretion over their social spending with no strings attached⁵⁷. The CHST, it was contended, 'represents an abdication of a national responsibility to protect the poor and the vulnerable wherever they live in the country' (Moscovitch, 1996:74).

Opponents warned that the CHST was potentially devastating for child-care. Under CHST provinces would not have to match or even spend federal dollars on child-care, they would be free to deregulate child-care services and therefore opt for unregulated care; the possibility of a national child-care program would be buried (OCBCC, 1995; Friendly & Oloman, 1995). Furthermore, it was maintained, as the more established programs - health, post-secondary education and welfare - are compromised by reductions in transfer payments, provinces may be tempted to pay for the short fall with funds normally used for the less stable programs such as child-care (Friendly & Oloman, 1995). Indeed, the CHST was criticised by others for significantly decreasing cash transfers to the provinces, for reducing the federal government's ability to enforce national standards in the only area where standards did exist (i.e. medicare), and for

⁵⁷ See Moscovitch (1996) for a discussion of the merits of the Canada Assistance Plan in relation to the inclusion of explicit and implicit 'national standards'.

disproportionately cutting provincial spending on welfare and social services. In spite of the federal government's clear and explicit constitutional responsibility to maintain national equity, these factors, it was argued, are likely to reduce both horizontal (i.e., province to province)⁵⁸ and vertical equity (i.e., equality of income) (Steinhauer, 1995). The disadvantages of the CHST appeared to clearly outweigh its advantages⁵⁹.

The child-care advocacy community responded immediately with pleas to the federal government to consider alternatives that would ensure the survival of federal funds for child-care. First, a separate consolidated child-care fund was proposed to enable the development of a system of child-care services under provincial jurisdiction, shaped by federal principles and policies (CCAAC, 1996). A designated fund, with national criteria, it was argued, would not only encourage the provinces to provide accountable public dollars for non-profit, regulated, quality child-care (OCBCC, 1996), but would also reinforce both the federal government's economic agenda and its commitment to social justice (Friendly & Oloman, 1995). Second, two caveats could be inserted into Bill 76: a Canada Child Care Act could be established and maintained as with the Canada Health Act⁶⁰; and a sufficient federal cash component could continue to enforce compliance with federal conditions and criteria for child-care (Friendly & Oloman, 1995:12). A final alternative proposed subjecting the CHST to public scrutiny and debate before it was implemented. The response of the government was to reaffirm its 'Red Book' commitments.

⁵⁸ Under Section 36(1) of the Canadian Constitution, horizontal equity is defined as: 'the principle that Canadians ought to be treated comparably by the fiscal system regardless of the province in which they live' (Steinhauer, 1995: 2). Under Section 36(2) of the Canadian Constitution, vertical equity is defined as: 'the principle that the federal government should be concerned with national standards to reduce inequalities of income between the wealthiest Canadians and those who are least wealthy, and to enhance equalities of opportunity for those most disadvantaged' (Steinhauer, 1995: 2).

⁵⁹ Two strengths of block funding were identified by The Caledon Institute of Social Policy: (a) the ability to remove - at least at the federal level - the artificial distinctions in place that tend to compartmentalise human needs as though they parallel the bureaucratic structure of government; and (b) the granting of more flexibility to the provinces which is seen as a positive move by the federal government in relation to the constitutional debate. The dangers of block funding were shown to be: the use of the CHST as a cost-cutting measure that will reduce federal presence in human services and greatly weaken its ability to ensure any form of national standards or conditions; no guarantee that funds will be spent for their intended purposes; no guarantee that the provinces will continue to make their respective contributions to social programs; no guarantee that a safety net will exist in Canada - the cause of financial need, the basis of the CAP funding arrangement, is irrelevant under CHST; and the senselessness of block funding outside of the context of related comprehensive reforms (Torjman & Battle, 1995).

⁶⁰ Five conditions of the Canada Health Act are enshrined in legislation as the foundation of the health proportion of the CHST (Moscovitch, 1996).

The Liberal's Record of Achievement

On December 13, 1995, in a climate of social spending cut-backs and the scaling back of transfer payments to the provinces, the federal government announced it would deliver on its 'Red Book' child-care commitments by providing the \$720 million split into three components (Toronto Star 14/12/95). The first was the First Nations and Inuit initiative designed to bring quality and quantity of child-care services to aboriginal communities. This program was allocated \$72 million to support; (a) the creation of 4300 new child-care places, and (b) the improvement of 1700 existing spaces. Another \$18 million was set aside for the second component, a research and development program called Child Care Visions. This initiative provided \$1.6 million over three years for the Canadian Child Care Federation (CCCCF) to establish a national clearinghouse on quality child-care.

The national clearinghouse will act as a central reference, referral, networking, resource development and distribution centre. The CCCCf will also provide a self-evaluation mechanism for programs in a variety of child care settings. (Human Resource Development, 1995:4)

These commitments resembled those put forth by the Howard Government which included funds for children with special needs and an information/referral centre.

The third component of the package was a partnership offer with the provinces and territories on child-care worth up to \$630 million. The federal government declared that it was prepared to proceed with its offer to work with the provinces 'to expand and improve their child care systems ... [and] to ensure the quality, affordability and flexibility of child care services ... if provincial and territorial participation is sufficient to establish a national program' (Human Resource Development, 1995: 3). Further, the (then) Minister for Human Resource Development, Lloyd Axworthy, acknowledged 'that child care is a provincial responsibility, and that provinces have different needs and priorities for child care. Our intention is to identify areas of common interest and shared priority to form the basis for federal-provincial and territorial agreements' (Human Resource Development, 1995: 3). At that point in time, only British Columbia, Saskatchewan and Nova Scotia showed any interest in matching federal child-care funds (Ottawa Citizen 14/12/95).

By February 15, 1996, it was announced that the plan for a national child-care program had been scrapped. The federal government blamed the provinces for their lack of enthusiasm even though all but two provinces expressed varying degrees of interest,

including Quebec, contrary to expectations (Globe and Mail, 16/2/96). Manitoba declined the offer outright, while Ontario issued no response at all. Since Ontario had previously invested more than any other province in its child-care system and received more than half of all federal funds allocated to child-care programs, Ontario's position was decisive. Despite the new Minister for Human Resource Development, Doug Young⁶¹, indicating that he had an 'exit strategy', the federal government's announcement was seen as an example of Ottawa's abdication of responsibility for child-care and of the 'off-loading' of costs onto the provinces (CCAAC, 1996a).

The 'exit strategy' involved the possibility of making a child-care program part of the federally run Human Resources Investment Fund. This was an \$800 million fund established as part of unemployment-insurance reform. Minister Young's main priority was reforming unemployment-insurance and his support for child-care was, not surprisingly, pertinent to its role of supporting employment (Globe and Mail, 16/2/96). Accordingly, at the September 1996 inter-provincial Social Services Ministers' meeting in Victoria, Minister Young presented a challenge to the provinces to get together to devise a national child-care program with national standards (CCAAC, 1996b). While provincial representatives were away working on the details, an emergency Cabinet reshuffle changed Mr. Young's portfolio; he replaced David Collenette as defense minister.

The new Minister for Human Resources Development, Mr. Pierre Pettigrew, met with his provincial counterparts in late November 1996 to launch a set of long-awaited negotiations. Prior to these 'so-called social-union negotiations', Minister Pettigrew gave his first major speech. He was reported to have declared his 'abiding respect for the provinces' and maintained that the provinces were better equipped than the federal government to design and deliver social programs that suited their diverse and differentiated labour markets (Globe and Mail, 11/7/96). Foreshadowing the demarcation of responsibilities on social and employment policies, Minister Pettigrew indicated that the federal government would redistribute income through the tax system and the provinces would deliver specific social programs. This reaffirmation of the federal government's devolution of responsibility for social programs followed a push by Ontario and Alberta for a strongly decentralised agenda at the August

⁶¹ A cabinet reshuffle had taken place in January shifting Lloyd Axworthy, who was human resources minister for two years, to the new portfolio of Foreign Affairs.

premiers conference. The new federalism being worked out between the federal government and the provinces was working against child-care, effectively closing the door on the possibility of the development of a national child-care strategy.

In 1997, as part of the budget, Minister Pettigrew introduced the National Child Benefit System (NCBS). He declared,

[n]ow that governments in Canada are making good progress in controlling their deficits, we are in a position to increase our investment to improve the prospects for poor children. ... In addition to being a win for Canadian children, the National Child Benefit System is a step forward in Canadian federalism, with the federal, provincial and territorial governments seizing on a good idea, setting common objectives and working as partners to secure better lives for our children' (Federal Government of Canada, 1997:1-2).

The National Child Benefit System was designed to address problems inherent in the existing method of financial assistance for families, which was considered to have created 'significant financial disincentives to leave social assistance', and consequently 'inadvertently formed a "welfare wall" that makes it difficult for parents to move from welfare to work' (Federal Government of Canada, 1997:2). The need to find affordable child-care was given as one example of a series of obstacles for parents moving from social assistance into the workforce. The NCBS is underpinned by three objectives agreed upon by the federal, provincial and territorial governments: the reduction and prevention of child poverty; the promotion of workforce attachment by improving work incentives, and the simplification of administration and harmonisation of programs and benefits in order to reduce overlap and duplication between the two levels of government. The approach is for Ottawa to 'strengthen the federal benefit' while the provincial and territorial governments 'improve services and benefits for low-income families with children, particularly the working poor' (Federal Government, 1997:8). The federal component was presented as the Canada Child Tax Benefit (CCTB)⁶². This is an enhanced and more sharply targeted version of the existing system, and is unlikely to make any great difference for low-income families who have to overcome the obstacle of finding affordable child-care in a climate of increasing child-care costs and centre closures.

Not long after the Liberal Government delivered its 1997 Budget, it was preparing for a June election. In its 1997 election platform the Liberal Party promised to spend 'one

⁶² The merits and disadvantages of the Child Tax Benefit are discussed in more detail in Chapter VI.

half of any fiscal surplus ... to strengthen [Canada's] social and economic programs' given first a balanced budget (Liberal Party of Canada, 1997:1). This would include the doubling of the \$850 million increase in spending on the Canada Child Tax Benefit announced in the 1997 Budget. The other half was designated for tax cuts and the further reduction of the national debt. According to the Liberals, they had, during their first mandate, achieved their aim of 'putting Canada's finances back on track' while putting Canada's 'major social programs on a secure and sustainable footing' (Liberal Party of Canada, 1997:1). Further, the economy had grown stronger and the federal government no longer needed to reduce the CHST over the next two years as scheduled.

Child-care was noticeably absent from the Liberal Party's campaign platform in 1997. There was, however, mention of the government's Aboriginal Head Start program, an early childhood development program initiated in 1995 that prepares young Aboriginal, Metis and Inuit children for school, and a proclamation that the government was willing to work in partnership with the provinces and territories to develop a National Children's Agenda for improving the well-being of Canada's children (Liberal Party of Canada, 1996). This indicates that there still may be some hope for the development of a national child-care strategy in Canada, albeit dependent on the involvement of the provinces and formed within the context of the new federalism pursued by the Chrétien Liberals. As explained in their election platform

[o]ur approach to modernizing Canada and enabling it to adapt to new realities follows the principle that responsibility should be entrusted to the order of government best able to act in the interests of the people within the framework of the Constitution. We have placed a premium on working collaboratively with the provinces on key issues. ... We have pledged not to use the federal spending power to create new cost-shared programs in areas of exclusive provincial jurisdiction without the consent of a majority of the provinces, and to compensate any non-participating province if it undertakes equivalent or comparable initiatives. (Liberal Party of Canada, 1997:2)

Despite the commitment to help give all Canadian children a better future and the constitutional opportunities to do so, and in spite of years of debate and evidence provided by advocates indicating that child-care benefits children, women and the society at large⁶³, the Chrétien Government continues, for the most part, to avoid

⁶³ Child-care was presented as an essential ingredient to healthy child development, to early learning that provides a foundation for education of a competent workforce, to ensuring that low income parents can participate in training and employment, to the reduction of child poverty, and to social development based crime prevention strategies (CCAAC, 1996a).

implementing a national child-care program. Instead, child-care is left to the individual initiative of the provinces and to the market place.

Canadian Child-Care Policy in the 1990s. A Summary

Despite a good deal of political rhetoric, discussion, review and debate on the merits of a national child-care system throughout the 1980 and 1990, the situation of child-care across Canada is in a state of decline, as is the case in Ontario, or, at best, remains unchanged. Social justice, equality and economic arguments put forward by the women's movement, child-care activists and other advocates of a national child-care system, in addition to recommendations made in the Social Security Review, fell on deaf ears. Not only has the federal government failed to implement a national child-care strategy, it has reduced funds made available to the provinces for social programs such as child-care. More importantly, it has recently implemented block funding to the provinces, which has effectively seen the devolution of its spending powers and the relinquishment of what little responsibility it had for child-care.

Summary

Child-care policy at a federal level in Canada and Australia appeared to diverge during the latter half of the 1980s. As we move closer to the twenty-first century the countries' policies are again beginning to resemble one another, particularly as economic rationalism and managerialism⁶⁴ have become part of the common political climate. While the Australian Labor Government had implemented a national child-care strategy in 1988, in 1992 its Canadian counterpart reneged for the second time on an eight year promise to create a national child-care program. In Australia, child-care was made part of both major political parties' economic agenda and featured prominently at the 1990, 1993 and 1996 federal elections. In Canada, financial and social pressures on the government to reduce the deficit meant that prospects for a national child-care policy had all but vanished. Child-care was not presented as an economic issue in Canada until 1993.

⁶⁴ Mitchell (1997) notes that prior to Pusey's exposure of economic rationalism, scholars such as Anna Yeatman (1987) had identified a related trend in public policy making referred to as 'managerialism'. Managerialism encompassed new models of public service provision that included user-charging, the contracting out of services to the private sector and the public subsidy of privately provided services. The extension of fee relief to the private sector (for-profit) providers of child-care in 1991 and the payment of child-care rebates to families using private child-care services from 1994 were the main effects of the managerialist agenda on child-care policy (Mitchell, 1997:15).

During the early 1990s, various bodies, committees and task forces, commissioned by the Labor Party when in office, examined the role of government in supporting child-care in Australia. Numerous recommendations were made, some proposing significant amendments to the Child Care Act that would make provisions for the planning and coordination of a national child-care system. Legislative change has yet to be introduced, though given the conservative ideology and small government orientation of the current Liberal Government such change is unlikely. Indeed, the Liberal Government has already begun to slash child-care funding and limit Commonwealth government involvement in the provision of formal child-care spaces.

Despite promising the development of a National Planning Framework (discussed in Chapter VIII), the Coalition appears to be shedding some of its child-care responsibilities. Direct government support for child-care services in the form of operational and capital grants for community-based long day care have already been withdrawn. Indirect demand side subsidies (i.e., tax concessions) are preferred instead. A preference for voluntary self regulation over mandatory accreditation for the child-care industry has also been indicated. The Liberal Party's objective to provide greater choice for parents who have to make child-care arrangements, however, appears to be undermined by its fiscal strategy. As will demonstrated in Chapter VI, without available and/or affordable formal child-care places, parents have little choice but to use informal care, if accessible, or to have one parent (usually the mother) stay at home to care for the children. This 'decontextualised understanding of "choice"', Kathy Teghtsoonian argues, fails to acknowledge 'the persistence of material and ideological constraints on women's "opportunity or privilege of choosing freely" with respect to the care of their children' (1996:119). Commonwealth support for child-care in Australia in the future is looking to be leaner and meaner, perhaps more like that provided by the federal government in Canada today.

Changes in child-care policy in Canada at both the federal and provincial level throughout the early 1990s have not kept up with the political rhetoric. Indeed, the child-care situation in Canada has deteriorated this decade. The new Liberal Government entered office in 1993 with a promise to implement a national child-care strategy and has allocated millions of taxpayers' dollars to the cause. However, given that the majority of the provinces and territories must agree on a cost-sharing arrangement, a national child-care program has yet to materialise. The introduction of the new Canada Health and Social Transfer has meant cuts to provincial transfer

payments and the removal of provisions for funds to be spent on particular programs, such as child-care. Consequently, provinces and territories have come under increasing financial pressure at a time when they have been given, and taken on, more and more social welfare responsibilities. Child-care in Canada is increasingly vulnerable to a change of government at the provincial level; the case of shifting directions in child-care policy in Ontario was provided as an example. The 1990s, like the 1980s, has again been witness to an open-and-shut window of opportunity for child-care in Canada. Perhaps, as the Canadian economy strengthens and the national debt declines, provincial governments will begin to look more favourably on child-care as beneficial for children, working parents, and society as a whole.

CHAPTER VI

THE ACCESSIBILITY OF CHILD-CARE IN THE 1990S: CHILD-CARE DEMAND, AVAILABILITY AND AFFORDABILITY.

Introduction

In the previous chapter, it was shown how governments have intervened in the child-care nexus to help make regulated or formal child-care accessible for families with young children, particularly for those families in which the sole parent or both parents in a couple family are employed outside of the home. Governments were also seen to offer financial assistance to help families meet the costs of rearing and caring for their children, regardless of whether the care is provided exclusively by the parent/s or with the aid of paid or unpaid others in an informal arrangement.

In this chapter current and changing patterns of child-care use are examined in light of policies promoting equity and aimed at improving the availability and affordability of quality child-care. It is expected that the availability of formal child-care places and the use of these places, particularly by sole parents and dual income earners with young children, will have increased, at least in Australia. Demand for, the availability and affordability of, and variations in, the use of formal child-care spaces in both countries are thus investigated as a measure of policy outcomes. Variations in other child-care arrangements are also examined in an attempt to assess the extent to which government support has helped different families with young children in the 1990s meet their diverse child-care needs.

Demand For Child-Care In The 1990s

The supply of formal child-care services has risen steadily in Australia and Canada throughout the past decade. The increase in demand in both countries, however, has outstripped supply. This is particularly evident in Canada, where almost a decade of fiscal restraint at both the federal and provincial levels of government has caused the rate of annual growth of child-care spaces to decrease¹ and a subsequent widening of the gap between the need for child-care and the availability of regulated spaces

¹ The rate of growth of child-care spaces in Canada pre 1990 ran between 10 to 16% . In 1990 the rate was 7.6%. It dropped in 1991 to 3.9% rising slightly to 5.3% in 1992 before falling again to 3.5% in 1993.

(Doherty, Rose, Friendly, Lero, & Irwin, 1995).

Demand for child-care services is often measured by the number of mothers with children under the age of 12 years who participate in the labour force (see Table 3.7, page 44). This approach is based on the underlying assumption that child-care primarily serves to permit parents to participated in the labour force or to train or study for such participation. In 1996, almost half of all Australian mothers with children 0-4 years of age participated in the labour force. The rate increased to just over two thirds for mothers with children 5-9 years and to nearly three quarters for mothers of children 10-14 years of age. The percentages are lower for sole mothers. In Canada, the increase in labour force participation of mothers by the age of their youngest child is less marked. Labour force participation rates are higher for Canadian mothers with very young children (60.8 percent for mothers with children 0-2 years) and rise to just over the Australian rate for mothers of school aged children (75.8 percent for mothers with children 6-12 years). There is also a larger proportion of women with young children working full-time in Canada than there are in Australia. That is, Australian mothers are more likely to work part-time, while Canadian mothers are more likely to work full-time. It is therefore expected that the demand for full-time regulated child-care would be greater in Canada than it is in Australia.

However, estimates based solely on the number of children with mothers in the paid workforce have a number of problems. First, they assume that all mothers who participate in the labour market require child-care services, although some families may have other arrangements. Second, they fail to include families where the parent(s) would like to participate in paid employment, job training or study, but cannot because of the lack of available and/or affordable child-care (Doherty et al, 1995).

The Economic Planning Advisory Commission Child Care Task Force predicts that the number of children aged eleven years and under using formal care will increase by around 18 percent (100,000 places) between 1996 and 2011 (see Table 6.1). That is, the expected rise in demand for formal child-care for children under five years of age is 15 percent (60,000 places) and 25 percent (40,000 places) for children aged five to eleven. This 'base care' prediction rests on three assumptions: [1] that there will be little change in the demand for informal care; [2] there will be no change in the average level of government subsidies for child-care costs; and [3] that female labour force participation will rise from a rate of 69 percent to 75 percent by 2011 (EPAC, 1996:25).

It also takes into consideration influential factors such as the cost of child-care to families, demographic trends and family friendly policies. Demographic trends include a slowing in the growth rate of children in age categories requiring child-care, significant growth in the number and employment of single parent families, a rise in labour force participation of women in age categories equivalent to the majority of mothers and grandmothers of young children, an increase in the number of women working in managerial occupations and in sales and retail (the former working longer hours while the latter work shorter, irregular part-time hours), and increases in home-based employment. The extent to which workplace practices and family-friendly policies help workers with young children to balance their work and family responsibilities will be another factor influencing demand for formal child-care.

Table 6.1: Projections for Future Demand for Child-Care, Australia.

PROJECTION CHARACTERISTICS	1996	2001	2006	2011
Children aged 0-4 years ('000)				
Children in Formal Care	406	441	454	466
Children in Informal Home-Based Care	180	185	184	184
Children in Formal and/or Informal Care	586	626	638	650
<i>Total Children</i>	<i>1419</i>	<i>1461</i>	<i>1453</i>	<i>1448</i>
Children aged 5-11 years ('000)				
Children in Formal Care	153	183	184	192
Children in Informal Home-Based Care	575	575	575	577
Children in Formal and/or Informal Care	728	758	759	769
<i>Total Children</i>	<i>1677</i>	<i>1851</i>	<i>1760</i>	<i>1765</i>
All Children ('000)				
<i>Total Children in Formal and/or Informal Care</i>	<i>1314</i>	<i>1384</i>	<i>1397</i>	<i>1419</i>

Source: EPAC (1996:25) Table 3.2.

While some factors indicate mounting demand for additional and flexible child-care services in the future others imply a decline. Given little change in the demand for informal child-care, in conjunction with the increased use of formal places to cater for more than one child, the Task Force predicts a moderate rise of 8 percent in the demand for non-parental child-care arrangements (EPAC, 1996:25). This is expected to cost the federal government around \$180 million per annum in 1995-96 dollars (\$160 million for children 0-4 years plus \$20 million for children aged five to eleven years) if the current level of subsidies are retained. Of course, if child-care fees rise, then the demand for formal places will decline and the need for informal places will increase. Conversely, if government funding increases the demand for formal child-care places is also likely to increase. Indeed, future demand has obvious implications for the amount of government funding required to make child-care available, affordable

and, overall, accessible for parents and for the successful outcome of government policies in the future.

The Canadian National Child Care Study² (NNCS) provided data for specific estimates of the number of families and children needing child-care to support parent's employment. Estimates were provided for families with at least one child younger than 13 years of age in which the interviewed parent was employed at the time of the survey. The number of families and children likely to need 30 or more hours of care, 20-29 hours of care, or fewer than 20 hours of care were based on the interviewed parent's usual work hours. 1,634,100 families (60% of those interviewed in the NNCS) were estimated to have needed some form of regular child-care in 1988; seventy percent of these families needed full-time care or 30 or more hours of care per week for at least one child. That is, 2,480,600 children (53% of all children 0-12 years) needed some child-care to support parental employment. Of all families needing work related child-care, 82.1 percent were dual earner families and 13.3 per cent were one-parent families. This suggests that child-care is a basic support for at least half of all Canadian families and that 'the everyday experiences of many young children are likely to include non-parental care' (Lero et al, 1992:93).

During the last decade, there has been a major increase in the use and requirement for (more) centre-based care and formal home-based care in Australia. Financial assistance from the federal government to families using paid child-care and an increase in parental awareness of the availability of child-care assistance has supported this growth. An indication of this manifest or unmet demand for formal child-care has been calculated by the Australian Bureau of Statistics. In its Child Care Survey series respondents are asked if they would have liked to use any (more) formal care services during the past four weeks. As Table 6.2 (below) illustrates, latent demand for formal child-care services in Australia has decreased from 17.1 percent in November 1990 to 8.4 percent for all in March 1996. Demand dropped by half for both children under five years of age and for children aged five years up to eleven. Nevertheless, parents of over a quarter of a million children would still like (more)

² The CNCCS was conducted as part of Statistic Canada's monthly Labour Force Survey. As such, the sample represents 97.9% of all Canadian children under 13 years of age, but excludes: children and families living in the Yukon and the Northwest Territories; children residing permanently in institutions; children and families living on Indian reserves; and Canadian children and families living outside Canada in September 1988 (Goelman, et al, 1993:21).

formal child-care services, with demand for care for preschoolers remaining twice that for school aged children.

Table 6.2: Demand for Formal Child-Care Services, Australia, 1990, 1993 & 1996.

(ADDITIONAL) FORMAL CARE REQUIRED	NOVEMBER 1990		JUNE 1993		MARCH 1996	
	Number '000	Percent %	Number '000	Percent %	Number '000	Percent %
Children Aged 0-4 Years						
Total (Additional) Formal Care Required	296.8	23.7	279.2	21.6	143.0	11.1
Total No (Additional) Formal Care Required	954.3	76.3	1014.4	78.4	1149.4	88.9
Total Number of Children	1251.1	100.0	1293.5	100.0	1292.4	100.0
Children Aged 5-11 Years						
Total (additional) formal care required	217.3	12.4	210.1	11.7	118.8	6.6
No (Additional) Formal Care Required	1535.3	87.6	1582.3	88.3	1691.7	93.4
Total Number of Children	1752.6	100.0	1792.4	100.0	1810.5	100.0
All Children						
Total (additional) formal care required	514.1	17.1	489.2	15.9	261.7	8.4
No Formal Care Required	2489.6	82.9	2596.7	84.1	2841.1	91.6
Total Number of Children	3003.7	100.0	3085.9	100.0	3102.8	100.0

Source: ABS (1997:25) Table 15. Cat: 4402.0

This manifest demand also varies by type of care, as depicted in Table 6.3. The younger children are most in need of (additional) occasional care, though less so now than in 1993. Only family day care has witnessed an increase in demand for this age group. In contrast, the demand for school aged children is for (additional) before and after school care and is greater than ever.

Table 6.3: Main Type of (Additional) Formal Child-Care Required, Australia, 1990, 1993 & 1996.

(ADDITIONAL) FORMAL CARE REQUIRED	NOVEMBER 1990		JUNE 1993		MARCH 1996	
	0-4 Year	5-11 Year	0-4 Year	5-11 Year	0-4 Year	5-11 Year
			Proportion %			
Before And After School Care Program	1.7	57.0	1.0	58.2	2.3	68.7
Long Day Care Centre	25.0	6.9	20.2	3.5	np	np
Family Day Care	17.9	10.4	15.0	8.7	15.9	5.3
Occasional Care (a)	-	-	50.6	24.0	40.0	20.9
Preschool	16.7	2.2	10.0	1.0	np	np
Other Formal Care (a)	38.8	23.5	3.1	4.6	2.5	2.4
Total Children Who Require (Additional) Formal Care	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Total Number of Children Who Require (Additional) Formal Care	296,800	217,300	279,200	210,000	143,000	118,800

Source: ABS (1997:26) Table 16.

As Table 6.4 (overleaf) illustrates, the main reason given for the use and requirement of (additional) formal child-care is work-related. Indeed, child-care needed as a basic

support for parental employment has increased over the past six years, particularly since 1993. In 1990, 25.7 percent of parents with 0-4 year olds gave work-related reasons as their primary purpose for wanting (more) formal care for their children. In 1993, this figure was 26 percent rising to 32.8 percent in 1996. The work-related demand for formal child-care was even higher for parents of children aged between six and twelve years rising from 54.1 percent in 1990 and 1993 to 59.6 per cent in 1996. It is difficult to determine whether these increases in demand were related to a rise in employment status and/or hours of work for parents with young children or due to reduced access to formal child-care as a result of limited availability of child-care places and/or increases in the cost of available child-care. It is most likely the consequence of a combination of these factors.

Table 6.4: Main Reason for (Additional) Formal Child-Care Required, Australia, 1990, 1993 & 1996.

MAIN REASON (ADDITIONAL) FORMAL CARE REQUIRED	NOVEMBER 1990		JUNE 1993		MARCH 1996	
	0-4 Year Olds	5-11 Year Olds	0-4 Year Olds	5-11 Year Olds	0-4 Year Olds	5-11 Year Olds
			Proportion %			
Work Related	25.7	54.1	26.0	54.1	32.8	59.6
Personal Reasons	50.5	34.5	53.3	36.6	46.8	29.8
Beneficial for Child	21.0	7.6	18.9	7.4	16.8	6.1
Other	2.8	3.9	1.8	2.0	3.6	4.5
Total Children Who Required (Additional) Formal Care	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Total Number of Children Who Required (Additional) Formal Care	296,800	217,300	279,200	210,000	143,000	118,800

Source: ABS (1997:27) Table 17.

Child-care is also required for purposes other than work-related reasons. Indeed, personal reasons remain the primary purpose for the majority of parents of preschoolers for wanting (additional) formal child-care. Other parents of children under five years of age have wanted (more) formal child-care for the benefit of their child, though the proportion of parents giving this reason has fallen since 1990. Work-related reasons, nevertheless, predominate for the demand for formal child-care by parents of children between the ages of six and twelve years. Personal reasons are also given for this age group. Few parents seek formal child-care for the benefit of their school aged child.

These trends suggest a number of things. First, formal child-care is increasingly being sort as a basic support for families with young children, particularly to support parental

employment. Second, the demand for occasional child-care primarily for personal reasons by parents of preschool aged children indicates that the primary caregiver - typically the mother - is seeking time out to tend to her own needs or to family needs. Indeed, 21 percent of parents with children 0-4 years of age and 10 percent of parents with children 5-11 years indicated 'giving parents a break / time alone' as the main reason they would like (additional) formal care (see ABS, 1997:27, Table 17). The next most common personal reasons given were shopping by parents of preschoolers and a visit to the hospital, doctor or dentist by parents of school aged children. Third, parents of very young children are increasingly seeking formal child-care for work-related reasons rather than for the benefit of their child, though the latter remains an important consideration. This shift may well reflect an upsurge in the economic exigency of Australian families and the encroachment of employment on family life, in addition to the inadequacies of the current child-care system.

The measure of 'felt need'³ described above to measure manifest demand is limited by its ability to indicate the conditions under which the demand would become effective (ABS, 1997:41). A series of follow up questions were designed to address this problem.

Thus, if formal care was required, parents were then asked what type of care was required for their children, and how much. If formal care was not required, parents were asked why they did not need this type of care. Parents who stated they had a requirement for formal care were also asked whether the care was available to be used during the four week reference period. If they reported that the care was available, they were then asked why they did not use it. If respondents answered that the service was not available, they were asked the main reason why they perceived it as being unavailable. (ABS, 1997:41)

The most common reason given by parents for not using the (additional) formal care they required was that none existed in the area or they did not know of any in the area (62,500 or 24 percent of all children who required (additional) formal care). The second most common reason given was that formal places were all booked out and that there were no available places (17.1 percent of all children who required (additional) formal care). This reason was the most common given by parents of children under three years of age (26 percent of all children under 3 years who required (additional) formal care). Prohibitive child-care costs was the third most

³ 'Felt need' is described as 'a requirement as articulated by an individual, judging his or her own circumstances' and is only one category of need defined by Bradshaw (1972) in his article on 'The concept of social need' (*New Society*. Vol 19, No. 496, pp640-643). The other categories of need are normative need, expressed need and comparative need (see Explanatory Notes, ABS, 1997:41).

common reason given by parents of children requiring, but not using, (additional) formal care. These figures testify to the fact that demand for formal child-care is influenced by the availability and affordability of these child-care arrangements.

The data presented in this section demonstrates that the demand for child-care has continued to increase in Australia throughout the 1990s and outstrip the supply of formal or regulated spaces. Demand for formal child-care is also reported to have increased in Canada. Indeed, while government policies in Australia have worked to ameliorate the accessibility of child-care services, the gap between supply and demand in Canada has widened. For instance, Doherty et al have noted that in 1993 'there were 636,513 *more* children under the age of 13 with mothers in the paid workforce who were not receiving regulated child care services' than there were in 1983; 'approximately 270,131 of these were under age 6' (1995:41). That is, only 12 percent of children with full-time working parents were served by regulated child-care in 1993. This figure dropped to 8.4 percent by 1995 (CRRU, 1997). In contrast, the rate of formal child-care usage by children with mothers working full-time in Australia rose by 21 percent from June 1993 to March 1996 (ABS, 1997:33).

This comparison exposes the failure of markets in Canada to meet demand and raises questions about the ability of economic market theory to predict that the supply of services will increase to meet the demand for formal or regulated child-care spaces.

As Doherty et al explain:

In order to be regulated, a service must meet certain standards, which, in turn, have a cost impact. ... Child care services in Canada are highly dependent on parent fees to cover their operating costs. However, many parents cannot afford the fees that regulated services must charge in order to survive. This has two results. First, many parents are forced to use unregulated child care services even though, as found by the *Canadian National Child Care Study*, many would prefer to use regulated child care (Lero, Goelman, Pence, Brockman & Nuttall, 1992). Secondly, even though a need exists, the demand is not effective because so many parents cannot afford to pay the fees for regulated care. (1995:43)

The shrinking of the gap between the supply of and demand for formal child-care spaces in Australia has been dependent upon federal government policy and substantial funding. In the following section it will become evident that similar market failure would occur in Australia if there was little government support for the provision of child-care.

Child-Care Availability

The demand for child-care in Australia and Canada has typically been satisfied through informal home-based care⁴. Due to increasing availability of formal child-care arrangements, especially for children under five years of age, the use of informal arrangements has fallen as a proportion of all children from 38.3 percent in 1987 to 36.4 percent in 1996 after a high of 42.3 percent in 1990. Indeed, since 1987, Australian children using informal care arrangements numbered almost twice as many as those using formal care arrangements with 1,128,300 or 36.4% of all children under twelve years of age using informal care in 1996 as opposed to 624,400 or 20.1% of children using formal care arrangements (ABS, 1997:11). The proportion of 0-4 year olds in informal care, however, dropped from 47.8 percent to 40.1 percent between 1987 and 1996, while the number of children using formal care arrangements increased by 125,500 or 8 percent of all children in this age group.

The number of children using informal care in Canada is even greater. Canada has a lower availability of formal or regulated child-care spaces. Although the number of regulated spaces in Canada increased by 53,700 between 1992 and 1995, the proportion of children they could accommodate on a full-time basis rose from only 7.5 percent to 8.4 percent of all children aged 0-12 years of age. The minimum proportion of children with mothers in the labour force that could use these regulated spaces was slightly higher at 13.1 percent for 1992 and 1995.

The availability of regulated child-care spaces varied across Canada and changed within each province between the years 1992 and 1995. As Table 6.5 reveals, the proportion of children 0-12 years for whom there was a regulated child-care space in 1995 is largest in Prince Edward Island (15.4%) and lowest in Saskatchewan (3.8%). Quebec, followed closely by British Columbia experienced the greatest change in the provision of regulated child-care spaces. Both provinces witnessed an increase in the number of spaces and the proportion of children potentially served by these spaces. At the same time, a fall in the proportion of children for whom there was a regulated child-care space was observed in Newfoundland, Prince Edward Island, Ontario, Manitoba, and Alberta. Only in Newfoundland was this associated with a decrease in

⁴ At least half of all Australian children use neither formal nor informal care arrangements. That is, they are cared for exclusively by their parents or, in the case of the older children, look after themselves (see Table 1, ABS, 1997:11).

the number of mothers with young children participating in the labour force.

Table 6.5: Number of Regulated Spaces and Availability as a Proportion of all Children 0-12 Years by Province / Territory, Canada, 1992 & 1995.

PROVINCE / TERRITORY	NUMBER AND AVAILABILITY OF REGULATED SPACES*				PROPORTIONAL CHANGE
	1992		1995		Proportion %
	Number '000	Proportion %	Number '000	Proportion %	
Newfoundland & Labrador	3.6	3.3	4.2	4.3	-1.0
Prince Edward Island	4.1	16.2	3.9	15.5	-0.7
Nova Scotia	10.8	6.8	10.6	6.8	0.0
New Brunswick	7.1	5.5	7.9	6.3	+0.8
Quebec	78.4	6.8	111.4	9.4	+2.6
Ontario	145.5	8.1	147.8	7.7	-0.4
Manitoba	19.0	9.1	18.8	9.5	-0.4
Saskatchewan	6.4	3.1	7.3	3.8	+0.7
Alberta	51.7	9.7	51.1	9.6	-0.1
British Columbia	42.9	7.4	59.8	9.6	+2.2
Northwest Territories	0.9	5.7	1.3	-	-
Yukon	1.0	16.7	1.1	-	-
<i>Total Canada</i>	<i>371.6</i>	<i>7.5</i>	<i>425.3</i>	<i>8.4</i>	<i>+0.9</i>

* Includes full and part-time centre-based care, family day care and school aged care spaces.

Source: CRRU (1994, 1997).

Comparable data on the number of formal child-care spaces for Australia is not available, although an indication of formal child-care availability is provided by the use of formal child-care and the proportion of children 0-12 years using formal child-care arrangements. It is arguable that the use data provides a better indication of the availability of formal child-care than does data on the number of regulated spaces. Each child-care place is not limited to the use of one child. Most formal care arrangements are used on a part-time basis and therefore cater to more children than there are spaces. Indeed, just over three quarters of all children in Australia using a formal care arrangement in 1996 were in care for less than 19 hours per week; 45.1 percent were in care for less than 9 hours per week (see ABS, 1997:16, Table 6).

As Table 6.6 (overleaf) indicates, the proportion of children using formal care arrangements in Australia increased by merely one percentage point with a rise in the number of accessible places of 28,200 between 1993 and 1996. Increases occurred primarily in the eastern States with New South Wales experiencing the largest growth. Tasmania, the Northern Territory and Western Australia, however, all witnessed a decline in both the number and proportion of children using formal care. A fall in the proportion of children using formal child-care was also observed in Queensland, despite a rise in the number of available places. Indeed, the variation between the

States/Territories expanded over this three year period, doing so at a greater rate than that for the overall growth in the proportion of children using formal care.

Table 6.6: Number and Proportion of all Children 0-12 Years Using Formal Care, Australia, 1993 & 1996.

STATE / TERRITORY	USE OF FORMAL CARE		PROPORTIONAL CHANGE		
	1993		1996		
	Number '000	Proportion %	Number '000	Proportion %	Proportion %
Queensland	115.7	21.1	119.	20.7	-0.4
New South Wales	187.3	17.9	212.	20.3	+2.4
ACT	14.9	28.1	15.	29.0	+0.9
Victoria	144.4	18.9	153.	20.3	+1.4
Tasmania	13.1	15.5	12.	15.2	-0.3
Northern Territory	7.5	19.7	6.	18.9	-0.8
South Australia	52.3	21.6	53.	22.3	+0.7
Western Australia	60.9	19.7	50.	16.2	-3.5
Range		12.6		13.8	5.9
<i>Total Australia</i>	<i>596.2</i>	<i>19.3</i>	<i>624.</i>	<i>20.1</i>	<i>+0.8</i>

Sources: ABS (1994:14); ABS (1997:14).

In contrast, the expansion of regulated child-care in Canada between 1992 and 1995 was primarily the result of additional regulated family day care spaces. Family day care constituted 12.3 percent of all regulated spaces in 1992, rising to 15.5 percent in 1995. Conversely, the number of school-aged places dropped from 16.4 percent to 14.0 percent of all regulated spaces over the same three year period. The number of centre-based full and part-time child-care spaces remained relatively unchanged (70.7% in 1992 and 70.5% in 1995).

These figures seem to suggest that care for school aged children is a lower priority than care for preschool aged, and that family day care is preferred for very young children. Indeed, family day care is a cheaper alternative to centre-based care; it requires less start up capital and has lower running costs, primarily because family day carers are paid substantially less than centre-based staff (see the section on affordability). The decrease in the proportion of children using formal arrangements is not necessarily related to a decrease in demand or a decrease in the number of mothers with young children participating in the labour force. It is most likely associated with a rise in the cost of child-care and/or a decline in the availability of places. As will become evident before the conclusion of this chapter, the amount of financial support governments in Canada and in Australia provide for child-care has an impact on the cost and availability of formal spaces.

In Australia, the growth in formal child-care occurred mainly in outside school hours care and long day care with a slight increase in the use of family day care (see ABS, 1997:12, Table 2). The number of children, primarily five to eleven year olds, attending outside school hours care more than doubled between 1990 and 1996, increasing by a third between 1993 and 1996. The use of long day care centres, mostly by 0-4 year olds, rose from 21.3 percent of all children using formal care in 1990, to 24.6 percent in 1993, before reaching 28.5 percent in 1996. The proportion of in family day care fell slightly from 14.7 percent in 1990 to 13.5 percent in 1993 before rising in 1996 to account for 15.4 percent of all children using formal child-care arrangements. Contrastingly, the number and proportion of children attending preschool in Australia has declined since 1990. In 1990, preschool attendance accounted for 50.4 percent of all children using formal care. By 1993, this figure has fallen to 39.7%. By 1996 the proportion of children attending preschool was only 32.1 percent of all children using formal care arrangements.

The data for Australia suggest a number of things. First, the increase in outside school hours care recognises that parental employment does not necessarily correspond to school hours, that a child's mother - it is usually the mother - will not necessarily be at home to get the child off to school in the morning and/or be there to greet their child at the end of the school day. Second, the rise in long day care in association with the decline in the use of preschool facilities suggests [1] that there is some blurring of the care / education split in Australia, and [2] that there is a growing acceptance that parents have time away from their children to attend to other personal or family needs.

Although long day care continues to be used primarily for work related reasons, it is also being used by parents for the benefit of their child and for personal reasons, particularly by parents with children 0-4 years of age (see ABS, 1997:18, Table 8). Long day care centres are increasingly providing educational programs, especially as Commonwealth funding for long day care centres in Australia is now tied to quality assurance and standards of care. Indeed, eighteen of the fifty-two principles and standards of care relate to the child-care program. For instance, it is stipulated, among other things, that the program 'incorporates learning experiences appropriate for each child ...fosters personal and social development... fosters fine and gross motor skill development ... fosters creative development and aesthetic awareness ... fosters intellectual development ... [and] fosters language development' (National Childcare Accreditation Council, 1993:x).

The increase in use of formal child-care for personal reasons suggests a growing acceptance that parents need time away from their young children to attend to personal and other family matters. This is perhaps in recognition of the increasing time pressure felt by mothers with young children, of the difficulties of shopping and going to the doctor or dentist with a small child in tow, and the need for mothers to have some time for themselves to relax or participate in social or sporting activities. The availability of formal child-care places could thus be viewed as a means by which some women are able to escape their family responsibilities and participate in society as a social citizen. However, formal child-care is far from universally accessible in Australia. Where it is available, it is often unaffordable, as will be shown in the ensuing section. This means that many women lack the opportunity for social as well as economic participation in society and that they and their families miss out on the resources that child-care and participation in civil society can provide⁵. Only when men share equally with women the responsibility of caring for their children 'will women's potentialities cease to be confined and limited by children' (Curthoys, 1976:3).

Parental Care Arrangements

Despite increases in the use of formal care arrangements, over half the children under 12 years of age in Australia continue to be cared for exclusively by their parents (ABS, 1997:11). These include 39% of children with both parents or a sole parent in the labour force. A study published by the Department of Health and Community Services found that where non-parental care was not used one or both parents either worked at home or if their workplace was elsewhere their hours of work did not overlap; if the children were of school-age, at least one parent worked only during school hours so he/she could be at home when the child was not at school (AIHW, 1997). Few studies specify which parent actually cares for the children, giving the impression that child-care is equally shared by mothers and fathers.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics Child Care Survey Series does not supply specific information about the gender of carers. One table, however, does provide data for mothers and fathers which gives an indication of the gender distribution of parental

⁵ Shute (1994) has shown how the lack of child-care facilities has been a major impediment to the participation of women in union activities, especially for those part-time workers for whom the lack of child-care has been the impetus for their employment status.

care (see Table 25). Children who used neither formal nor informal care arrangements, those most likely being cared for exclusively by their parents, are four times more likely to have a mother than a father who is not employed and thus able to care for their young children at home. While these children are only twice as likely to have a father in employment as they are to have an employed mother the number of hours their mothers are likely to work are considerably less than the number of hours per week their fathers are likely to work⁶. Again this means that mothers are more likely than fathers to devote themselves to the care of their children, whether by choice and/or as a consequence of structural inequalities that shape their economic circumstances and employment prospects.

Although time use surveys show that fathers are spending increasingly more time caring for their children, 'they have not moved in large numbers from being helpers to taking responsibility for their children' (Dempsey, 1997:42). Recent research in Australia, Canada, the USA, UK, and even in Sweden and Finland, countries which have been officially following gender equality policies for decades, indicates that men have increased their participation in the more pleasant child-care tasks but continue to leave the less attractive and more time consuming tasks to the mothers of their children (Dempsey, 1988, 1994, 1997⁷; Baxter, 1993; Bittman, 1995; Bittman, Bryson & Donath, 1992 & 1993; Lamb, 1987; Glezer, 1991; Luxton, 1980; Horna, 1989; Haas, 1992; Eveline, 1994). Fathers tend to play with and mind their children while mothers do substantially more of the feeding, bathing, clothing, teaching, providing emotional support, taking children to and attending their activities, and assisting children with their homework⁸. That is, child-care for fathers tends to be leisure. For mothers, it is a labour of love viewed primarily as a domestic contribution and semi-leisure at best (Horna, 1989). Thus it is not surprising that mothers of the 1990s in Australia and in Canada, as in other Western democratic societies, retain the role of primary carer (Dempsey, 1997:228).

⁶ Bryson (1994) has shown that married women are not only much more likely to work part-time than are married men, but their work histories are also likely to be broken by childrearing.

⁷ Dempsey provides a review of other relevant research.

⁸ Baxter (1993) found that the tasks men were most likely to share, excluding play, was putting the child to bed, while the task they were least likely to share was changing nappies. When play is included, father's parenting time is seen to be mostly dedicated to playing with their children, while mothers do the more demanding routine tasks of feeding and bathing (Lamb, 1987).

A comparison of time spent by Australian and Canadian men and women on primary child-care activities in 1992, as shown in Table 6.7, confirms this observation. Data used in the comparison come from the Australian Bureau of Statistics Australian Time Use Survey, 1992 and from the 1992 General Social Survey conducted by Statistics Canada. Women in Australia and Canada spend significantly more time on all child-care activities than do the men in each country, with the exception of playing with their children. Canadian men, however, spend on average three hours and twelve minutes more per week on child-care than do their Australian counterparts. They spend almost twice as much time playing with their children, as do Canadian women compared to Australian women, and spend substantially more time involved in the physical child-care activities. Consequently, Australian women spend almost two hours more per week performing activities such as nappy changing, bathing and feeding.

Table 6.7: Mean Hours Per Week Spent on Primary Child-Care Activities^a by Sex of Carer.

VARIABLE	AUSTRALIA (n=1847)			CANADA (n=2046)		
	Mean Duration	Male Mean	Female Mean	Mean Duration	Male Mean	Female Mean
	Hours per week					
All Child-care Activities	13.38***	7.92	16.25	14.60***	11.11	16.18
Physical Care	8.55***	3.37	10.53	7.40***	4.73	8.60
Guidance	0.60**	0.45	0.68	0.88**	0.55	1.05
Playing With Child	2.58	2.62	2.57	4.13	4.00	4.18
Transporting Child	1.92***	1.37	2.20	1.58*	1.38	1.67
Other Child-care	0.20**	0.08	0.25	0.57*	0.42	0.63

^aAll child-care activities comprise the total of all comparable child-care activities: physical child-care activities (i.e., bathing, feeding, changing nappies); guidance activities directed at child's education / intellectual development (i.e., teaching, directing, disciplining); play / entertainment oriented child-care activities; and child-care activities not already classified (i.e., communicating with child, attending child performances).

NB: Sample sizes restricted to records with at least one child-care episode of duration ≥ 1 minute)

Sex difference significant levels * p<.10, ** p<.05, *** p<.000

It has been suggested that the persistence of the division of child-care labour between men and women is due to the prevailing traditional social attitude that unique skills of mothers are all a child may need. This is an attitude which has also been used to justify the exclusion of single income families from being eligible for subsidised formal care arrangements (Cox, 1996). Dempsey argues on the other hand that traditional ideologies alone do not explain the persistence of such phenomena as the traditional division of child-care and household labour. However, he asserts that the high correlation between traditional expectations and the inequality in most marriages suggests traditional ideologies 'are closely linked to the self-understandings and

behaviour of many and possibly most husbands and wives' (1997:206).

While providing a useful indication of gender inequity in parental care, time budget studies which are based on a workplace notion of time, treat child-care primarily as linear and distinct (Cox, 1993). This simplifies the reality and experience of child-care, particularly of parental child-care which is typically undertaken in conjunction with other events as the secondary or even tertiary activity. Child-care tasks are mostly ongoing, repeated, and/or interwoven with other activities or aspects of life (Cox: 1993; Bramel, 1991). Moreover, the time spent on child-care is mostly cyclical rather than linear or cumulative (Waring, 1988; Haavind and Andenaes: 1990). Where time spent on work outside of the home is perceived, for the most part, in terms of quantity and boundaries being relatively easy to schedule and structure, time spent on child-care is scheduled by the child and experienced in a qualitative, variable, and sensuous fashion (Bramel, 1991). While further research is required to gain an understanding of the different ways in which child-care is experienced by mothers and fathers, time budget studies are useful in indicating that there is a gendered differentiation in the time spend on different child-care tasks, and thus by extension that their experiences of child-care will also differ. Time budget studies also highlight some of the issues, contradictions and challenges in women's care work with children, and emphasises that child-care differentially affects the lives of men and women (Moore, 1991).

Child-Care Funding and Affordability

Child-care debates in Australia and in Canada have been focused on three interrelated issues: availability, affordability and quality of care. Availability and affordability determine accessibility of formal child-care services. Affordability, is a significant factor in determining the demand for formal child-care and, as will be explained in detail in Chapter VII, is 'the crux of the quality debate' (Wangmann, 1995:54).

Throughout the 1990s the cost of child-care in Australia and in Canada has increased steadily with inflation, increasing start-up and running costs, and in response to government policy and funding arrangements. In 1993, the average cost of long day care in Australia was \$125 per child per week or \$6000 per year (based on 48 weeks of care). In Canada, the cost was slightly less at an average of \$106 per week. Though, as Table 6.8 (below) illustrates, the cost of child-care varies considerably from province to rovince, displaying greater variation than is observed between the Australian states and territories. The cost of care for infants in centre-based care is

generally higher while the cost of family day care tends to be lower in both countries, particularly where care is for infants and preschoolers⁹. The cost to parents is also dependent on family situation, family income level, and place of residence.

Table 6.8: The Average Cost of Day Care by State/Province and Territory, Australia and Canada, 1993.

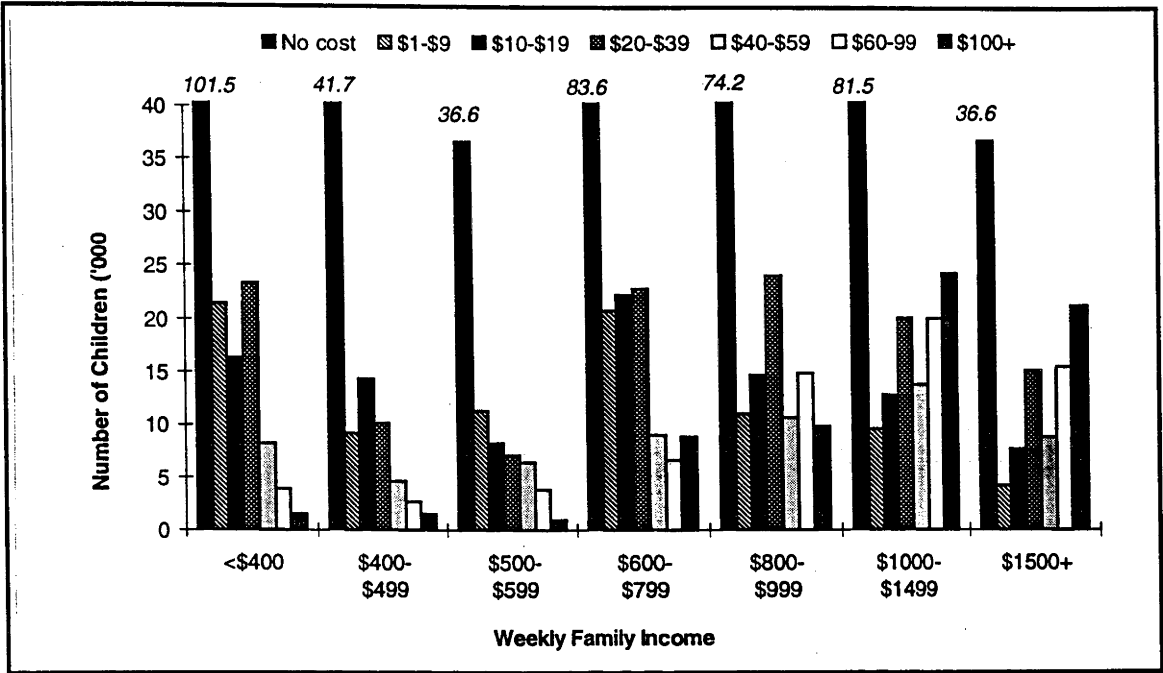
AUSTRALIA		CANADA	
<i>State / Territory</i>	<i>\$ Per Child Per Week</i>	<i>Province / Territory</i>	<i>\$ Per Child Per Week</i>
Queensland	115	Newfoundland & Labrador	93
New South Wales	125	Prince Edward Island	113
ACT	131	Nova Scotia	na
Victoria	125	New Brunswick	90
Tasmania	133	Quebec	92
Northern Territory	117	Ontario	176
South Australia	132	Manitoba	110
Western Australia	122	Saskatchewan	93
		Alberta	91
		British Columbia	122
		Northwest Territories	125
		Yukon	119
<i>Australian Average</i>	<i>125</i>	<i>Canadian Average</i>	<i>106</i>

Sources: AIHW (1997) Table 4.17; CRRU (1994, 1997).

In Canada, the cost of child-care services accounts for a higher percentage of income for low-income single-parent families than for comparable two-parent families, the cost for middle-income families is a higher percentage of their income than for low- and upper-income families, and costs for families at the same income level vary from province to province (Doherty, et al, 1995). For instance, in Saskatchewan a single parent famiy with one infant and one preschooler on a net income of \$10,000 per annum pays 33.1% of their income in child-care fees, while the child-care costs for a similar couple family in the same province with a net income of \$12,000 would pay only 4.0% of the family income. Moreover, if these families lived in Nova Scotia they would have to pay 5.2% and 3.3% respectively, and if the family income was \$45,000 per annum the fees would amount to 12.2% and 14.8% respectively. The situation in Australia exhibits some of these inequalities.

⁹ See Appendix J for a comparison of fees for selected service types by state/territory in Australia and Appendices K, L, M, and N for a comparison of fees charged for infants, preschoolers and school-aged children in Canada for 1984, 1992 and 1995.

Figure 6.1: Cost of Child-Care to Parents by Weekly Family Income, Australia, 1996.



Source: ABS (1997:22) Table 1.

Figure 6.1 illustrates the distribution of child-care costs by parents' weekly income in Australia in 1996 for children using formal and/or informal care. In general, as family income increases the proportion of children using formal and informal care arrangements also increases. For instance, 43% of children in families with a weekly income of less than \$400 used some form of care, compared to 75% of children in families with a family income in excess of \$2000 per week. This is most likely a reflection of the proportion of families with both parents participating in the labour force. The vast majority of families in each income group or 53 percent of all children, however, had no child-care costs; 96% of these children used informal care arrangements. Only five and a half percent of children in formal care arrangements in 1996, compared to ten percent in 1993, had no child-care costs¹⁰. Of those with child-care costs, the majority (69.4%) paid less than \$40 per week or less than \$1920 per year¹¹.

Costs varied by type of care. For instance, 31% of children who attended long day care and 24% of children who attended family day care paid \$60 or more per week (\$2880 per year), while 63.5% of children attending preschool paid less than \$20 per

¹⁰ The majority of children using formal child-care who had no child-care costs attended preschool.

week (\$960 per year). Of the children who used formal care, 5,200 from families with a weekly income of less than \$400 paid no child-care fees compared to 10,600 children from families with weekly incomes of over \$800 per week. The majority of families using formal and/or informal child-care arrangements paid between \$20 and \$39 per week, or between \$960 and \$1872 per year in child-care fees. Substantially more families with a weekly income between \$400 and \$599 per week than other family income groups paid less than \$20 per week in child-care fees. Of all children using formal care, 19.1 percent paid less than \$10 per week¹². Contrastingly, families earning over \$1000 per week were more likely to pay \$60 per week or more for formal and/or informal arrangements, many paying over \$100 per week¹³. Indeed, in 1996 twice as many children (20.9%) were in formal care for which their parents paid over \$60 per week than there were in 1993 (10%). Nonetheless, many parents would not be able to afford child-care without assistance from the government.

The data presented in this section clearly illustrates that while the cost of child-care, on average, is relatively similar in Australia and Canada, it varies within each country, significantly so in Canada. The contribution made by parents to the cost of child-care is generally lower in Australia. Moreover, parental fees are relatively uniform across the states and territories due to a narrower range in the cost of child-care and the availability of Commonwealth child-care subsidies or fee relief¹⁴ for a variety of child-care arrangements. The varying subsidies provided by the Canadian provinces and territories, in conjunction with a wide range of child-care costs, has led to vast inequalities in the affordability of child-care across Canada. Such inequalities are also perceptible when variations in child-care arrangements are examined.

Variations in Child-Care Arrangements

Current patterns of child-care arrangements are indicative of the options, or lack thereof, open to an array of family types with diverse child-care needs. Families in Australia and Canada vary in structure and socio-economic status. These characteristics, for the most part, determine what child-care arrangements are available to them.

¹¹ Annual child-care costs are calculated on 48 weeks per year to be comparable with the Canadian National Child Care Study calculations.

¹² The corresponding figure in 1993 was 33 percent (ABS, 1994).

¹³ The most likely informal arrangement in this price range would be care by a nanny or au pair.

¹⁴ The types of fee relief and other government funding for child-care in Australia is discussed in detail in Chapter VII.

Consequently, the child-care needs of different families are met by a variety of child-care arrangements. For instance, some families use only parental child-care while others may use a combination of parental and non-parental care. Further, those who use non-parental care may use only one or a combination of different care arrangements, and as was seen in the previous section, the kind of arrangement may well be determined by its cost. Variations in child-care arrangements are therefore determined by the accessibility of different types of child-care as much as they are determined by the child-care needs and preferences of families.

The purpose of this section is to illuminate the variation of child-care arrangements as they relate to different family characteristics. The focus is primarily on variations within Australia due to the lack of comparable data for Canada. Where the data permits, the analysis is extended to include comparisons between child-care patterns in Australia and Canada, in an attempt to reveal the influence of disparate child-care policy on the child-care arrangements of different Australian and Canadian families.

Variation by Family Type

Child-care arrangements vary among different family types. Moreover, the change in child-care arrangements between 1993 and 1996 has also varied by family type. As Table 6.9 below illustrates, single parent families are more likely to use non-parental care than are couple families, particularly informal care arrangements. While the proportion of single parent families and the proportion of couple families using formal care arrangements in 1996 were both around twenty percent - use by couple families having increased by 1.4% and use by single parent families having decreased by 2.9% since 1993 - the proportion of single parent families using informal care was ten percent higher than the proportion of couple families using this type of care.

Table 6.9: Use of Child-Care Arrangements by Family Type, Australia, 1993 & 1996.

TYPE OF CARE	COUPLE FAMILIES		ONE PARENT FAMILIES		TOTAL	
	1993	1996	1993	1996	1993	1996
Formal Care	18.8	20.2	22.8	19.9	19.3	20.1
Informal Care	36.4	34.9	46.3	44.9	37.8	36.4
Formal and Informal Care	7.9	8.6	11.6	9.8	8.3	8.1
Parental Care	52.7	52.7	42.5	45.0	51.2	51.6
Total Children *	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Total Children ('000)	2656.7	2653.9	429.2	449.0	3085.9	3102.8

* The sum of all types of care is more than 100% by the percentage of children using both formal and informal care, since the categories Formal Care and Informal Care include children using both.

Sources: ABS (1994:9) Table 1.7; ABS (1997:27) Table 17.

This indicates that the cost of formal care arrangements may well have become prohibitive for single parent families, many of whom are headed by low income working mothers. Moreover, the drop in the proportion of single parent families using informal care and both non-parental forms of care points to a decrease in the labour force participation of single parents.

Variation by Main Language Spoken at Home

Families whose main language used at home is one other than English, presumably families of Non-English Speaking Background (NESB), display lower rates of non-parental care usage than those families whose main language spoken at home is English. The disparity, shown in Table 6.10, is most evident among those who use formal care arrangements; only 14.6 percent of non-English speaking families used formal care in 1996 compared to 21 percent of English speaking families. Conversely, the proportion of non-English speaking families who use only parental care arrangements is over ten percent larger than the proportion of English speaking families who use neither formal nor informal child-care, despite a decrease in parental child-care use by the former group between 1993 and 1996 and an increase in the use of parental care arrangements by the latter group.

Table 6.10: Child-Care Arrangements by Main Language Spoken at Home, Australia, 1993 & 1996.

TYPE OF CARE	ENGLISH SPOKEN AT HOME		OTHER LANGUAGE SPOKEN AT HOME	
	1993	1996	1993	1996
Formal Care	20.0	20.9	14.1	14.6
Informal Care	39.3	37.4	26.8	29.4
Formal and Informal Care	8.9	8.7	4.0	3.6
Parental Care	49.6	50.4	63.1	59.6
Total Children *	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Total Children ('000)	2656.7	2653.9	429.2	449.0

* The sum of all types of care is more than 100% by the percentage of children using both formal and informal care, since the categories Formal Care and Informal Care include children using both.
 Sources: ABS (1994:9) Table 1.7; ABS (1997:27) Table 17.

The variations in child-care arrangements by main language spoken at home raise a number of questions about the accessibility and appropriateness of existing formal care arrangements for different family types. The higher rates of parental care for NESB families may indicate a cultural preference for mothers - it is typically mothers - to stay-at-home to care for their children while they are young. However, it is most likely a reflection of the lack of options open to these families. Like single parent

families, families of non-English speaking background tend to have low family incomes and are thus less able to afford the child-care services they may require, especially given little or no financial assistance. They may well be unaware of any available child-care services in their area and, even more likely, to be unaware of the availability of financial assistance from the government such as Childcare Assistance.

Variation by Area of Usual Residence

Child-care arrangements vary by area of usual residence for those who use formal care arrangements, though little variation in the use of informal arrangements exists between families who live in the major capital cities and those who live in smaller urban and rural areas. As Table 6.11 indicates, both categories demonstrate an increase in the use of formal child-care between 1993 and 1996. This accounts for the rise in the use of children using both forms of care as there was a decrease in the number of children across Australia using informal non-parental care. The number of children using neither non-parental care arrangements (i.e., children exclusively cared for by their parents or who look after themselves) remained unchanged for children living in major urban areas and rose slightly for children living in non-major urban areas of Australia. Despite the increased use of formal care by children living in small urban and rural areas, these children remain disproportionately cared for by their parents. The decline of informal care arrangements has not been replaced by a corresponding increase in the use of formal arrangements. Indeed, it appears as though the policies of consecutive federal governments aimed at making formal child-care available to and affordable for rural Australians have been ineffectual or, at least, inadequate.

Table 6.11: Child-Care Arrangements by Area of Usual Residence, Australia, 1993 & 1996.

TYPE OF CARE	STATE CAPITAL CITIES		BALANCE OF AUSTRALIA	
	1993	1996	1993	1996
Formal Care	20.6	21.2	17.4	18.6
Informal Care	37.0	36.5	39.0	36.4
Formal and Informal Care	8.6	8.7	8.0	8.9
Parental Care	51.0	51.0	51.6	52.4
Total Children *	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<i>Total Children ('000)</i>	<i>2656.7</i>	<i>2653.9</i>	<i>429.2</i>	<i>449.0</i>

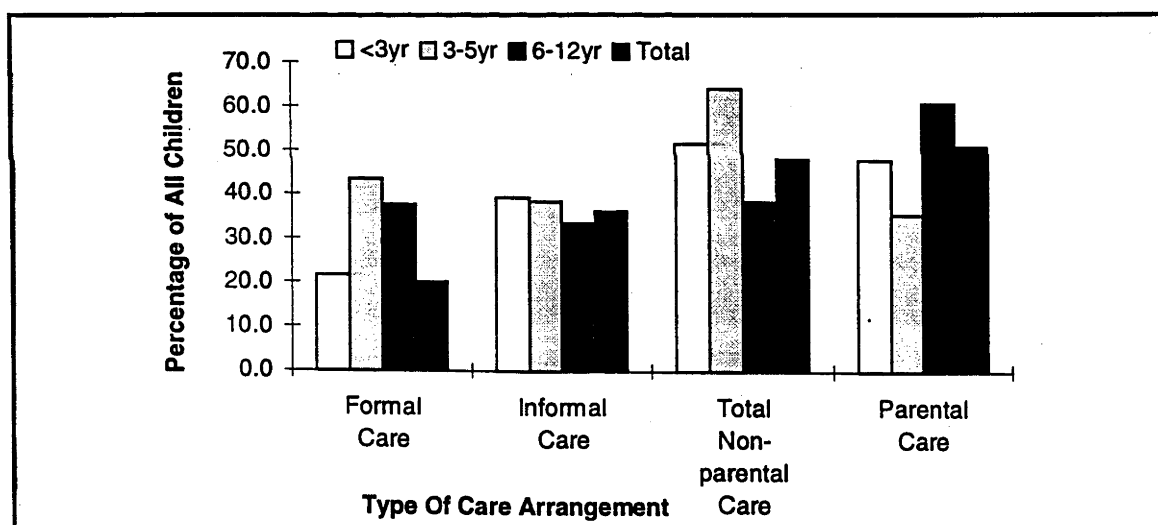
* The sum of all types of care is more than 100% by the percentage of children using both formal and informal care, since the categories Formal Care and Informal Care include children using both.

Sources: ABS (1994:9) Table 1.7; ABS (1997:27) Table 17.

Variation by Child's Age

The type of child-care arrangements Australian families use is influenced by the age of the child. As Figure 6.2 illustrates, there is a definite relationship between a child's age and parental child-care to the exclusion of supplementary arrangements, at least for the first five years after birth. Once a child begins school there appears to be little change in the percentage of children in each age group who are cared exclusively by their parents. Caution, however, is required when reading the data relating to the care of school aged children. The Australian Bureau of Statistics does not provide a category of self care, even though it is very possible that a sizable number of primary school children look after themselves before and after school when their parent/s are at work or travelling to and from the workplace. Nonetheless, it is notable that almost two thirds of babies and almost 60 percent of school aged children, as compared to one third of four year olds, received no supplementary care during the survey week.

Figure 6.2: Child-Care Arrangements by Age of Child, Australia, 1996.



Source: ABS (1997:13) Table 3.

In contrast, the use of non-parental arrangements rises steadily with each additional year of age for the first five years¹⁵. Just over a third of Australian babies, as opposed to over three quarters of three year olds and almost 80 percent of four year olds, were cared for by some one other than a parent. At the age of five, the percentage of children in some form of non-parental child-care plummets to almost half that for four year olds. This is the age at which Australian children usually commence school.

¹⁵ Appendix Q provides a breakdown of age groups: including percentages for Under 1, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6-8, 9-11 year olds.

The use pattern of non-parental child-care is effected mostly by changes in the number of children in formal care arrangements, regardless of whether or not those who use both forms of care are included¹⁶. The rise and fall in formal care usage between different age groups was rather striking, while the rate of growth and decline in the use of informal care in 1996 in Australia was relatively small, changing by no more than 10 percentage points. Indeed, the use of formal care arrangements ranged from a low of 7.6% for under one year olds to 62.1% for four year olds; a change of 54.5%, with a rate of growth around 15 percent with each year of age for the first five years. The number of five year olds in some kind of formal care arrangement, however, was only 32,000. This figure was substantially less than that for all other age groups except for the under one year olds. The majority of the older children (53.7% of six to eight year olds and 38.8% of nine to eleven year olds) were in before and after school care programs. The relatively small proportions of five year olds in non-parental care, particularly in formal arrangements is somewhat puzzling. However, if the first year of school is viewed as a challenging, even stressful time for young children then it is not surprising that Australian parents - presumably the mothers,¹⁷ would arrange to be at home to help meet the emotional as well as physical and psychological needs of their five year old children when they are not in school.

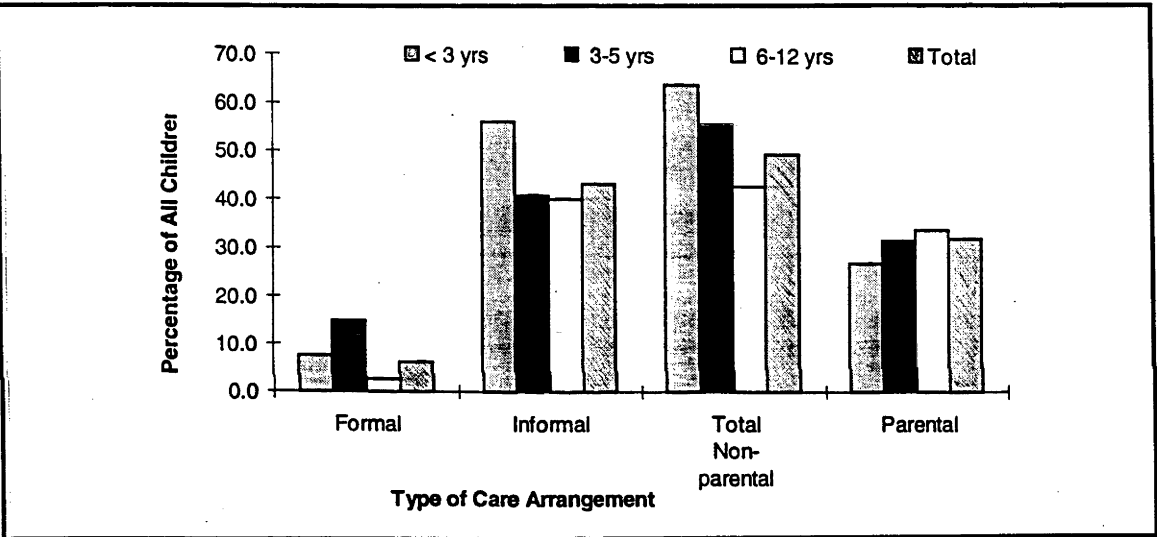
The proportion of children in informal care arrangements was also higher than the proportion of children in formal care arrangements for most age groups. This suggests that the cost of child-care is a prohibitive factor effecting patterns of formal child-care arrangements. Indeed, the fact that informal care arrangements were used by substantially more families with babies than were formal care arrangements (33.6% compared to 7.6%, respectively) attests to the proposition that the care of infants is more expensive than the care of toddlers, preschoolers and school aged children. The desirability and availability of preschool programs for three and four year olds may well account for the higher proportion of children of these age groups in formal care.

¹⁶ The proportion of children who are in a combination of formal and informal child-care arrangements ranges from 2.2% for 9-11 year olds to 25.3% for 4 year olds (ABS, 1997:13).

¹⁷ Australian women spend significantly more time providing child-care than do Australian men - see Table 4.4 and Table 4.5. Moreover, Australian mothers are more likely than Australian fathers to be available to care for their young children, whether by choice or necessity: significantly more mothers than fathers are not employed and substantially more mothers than fathers work less than 24 hours per week (see Table 25, ABS, (1997:34)).

Age related child-care data for Canada is available only for 1988¹⁸ and is presented in slightly different age categories than that provided by the Australian Bureau of Statistics. The available data does, however, remain relevant given that the gap between the demand and supply of formal or regulated child-care places in Canada has widened during the past decade, especially as it is only patterns of parental and non-parental child-care arrangements that are being compared. The purpose of doing so is to illustrate a few significant and persistent differences between the care arrangements for young and very young children in Australia and Canada.

Figure 6.3: Parental, Formal and Informal Child-care Arrangements by Age of Child, Canada, 1988.



Source:: CNCCS (1992) Table 4.24.

As can be seen in Figure 6.3, the patterns of non-parental child-care in Canada are somewhat similar to those in Australia, with a few noticeable differences. First, the proportion of children in non-parental care is higher in Canada than it is in Australia for all children and for each age group. Conversely, the proportion of children cared for exclusively by a parent - typically the mother - is lower in Canada than it is in Australia. Second, the proportion of under three year olds, particularly babies, in informal non-parental care is much larger in Canada than it is in Australia. While over 30% of Canadian babies (0-17 month olds) are in a paid non-parental care arrangement, only 5.4% of these are in a formal or regulated care situation.

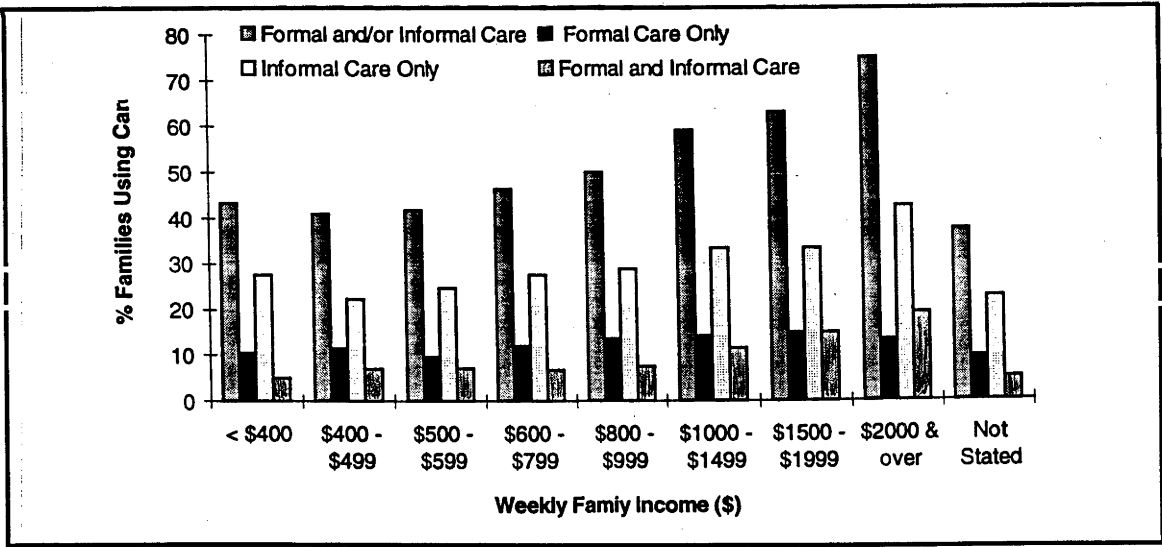
¹⁸ The Canadian National Child Care Study undertaken in 1988 is the only survey that provides data of this kind for Canada.

The majority of toddlers (25.1% of 18 -35 month olds) are cared for by unlicensed and unregulated informal caregivers in a paid arrangement. The use of a licensed facility (formal paid care arrangement) for these very young children is, however, more extensive than it is for babies (15.2% compared to 5.4% respectively). The use of paid informal care arrangements is also common among families with preschoolers: 18.7% of 3-5 year olds are cared for in an unlicensed paid non-parental care arrangement while only 8.8 percent attend kindergarten or nursery school programs before commencing school. 13.9 percent of 3-5 year olds in Canada attend a day care centre while their parents are working or studying. This contrasts with the Australian situation where the proportion of children who attend pre-school or kindergarten¹⁹ has remained at approximately 15 percent since 1987.

Variation by Family Income

Child-care usage in Australia has also been found to be related to family income (Sweeney and Jamrozik, 1982, 1984, 1996). As Figure 6.4 shows, the extent of child-care usage is positively related to family income²⁰. That is, the higher the family

Figure 6.4: Child-Care Arrangements by Income Group, Australia, 1996.



Source: ABS (1997:21)

¹⁹ All States/Territories except for Queensland and Western Australia offer a full-time (five days per week, approximately six hours per day) pre-Year 1 program within primary schools. Queensland and Western Australia offer only part-time pre-Year 1 programs. Primary school begins with Year 1 at about six years of age. Some States/Territories also offer part-time (usually four half-days per week) programs in the year prior to pre-Year 1. These programs are run by various auspices, have different names in various jurisdictions and different ages of entry (AIHW, 1997; Table A4.1).

²⁰ Data from the 1996 ABS Child Care Australia Survey used in Figure 6.4 is tabled in Appendix O.

income the greater the use of child-care. This is consistent with earlier studies and ABS survey findings (see Appendix P). The relationship is most obvious given the proportion of children using formal and/or informal child-care, and is also apparent for those children who are cared for in either form of care arrangement as well as for those using both formal and informal child-care.

Variation Across States/Provinces and Territories

Variation in parental and non-parental child-care arrangements occur across states and territories in Australia and among provinces and territories in Canada. As Table 6.12 shows, the disparity in Australia increased between 1993 and 1996. For instance, the use of formal child-care arrangements ranged from a low of 10.0 percent of all children under twelve years of age in Tasmania and Victoria in 1993 to a high of almost 16.5 percent in the Australian Capital Territory (ACT). In 1996, the proportion of children using only formal care arrangements in Tasmania had dropped to 8.1 percent, despite an Australia wide increase of 1.0 percent and a high of 17.3 percent in the ACT. Parental care arrangements predominated in all states and territories with Western Australia exhibiting the highest usage.

Table 6.12: Parental, Formal & Informal Child-Care Arrangements by State & Territory, Australia, 1993 & 1996.

STATE / TERRITORY	FORMAL CARE ONLY		INFORMAL CARE ONLY		BOTH TYPES OF CARE		PARENTAL CARE*		TOTAL CHILDREN	
	1993	1996	1993	1996	1993	1996	1993	1996	1993	1996
	Proportion (%)						Number ('000)			
New South Wales	10.6	12.3	29.0	26.4	7.2	8.0	53.2	53.3	1048.5	1047.5
Victoria	10.0	11.9	30.0	31.2	8.9	8.4	51.1	48.5	763.3	757.7
Queensland	12.8	13.3	27.6	25.6	8.4	7.4	51.2	53.7	546.5	579.0
South Australia	11.2	12.0	31.2	32.2	10.4	10.3	47.2	45.5	242.0	238.7
Western Australia	10.6	9.5	30.8	28.6	9.1	6.7	49.5	55.2	309.8	310.4
Tasmania	10.0	8.1	30.0	32.7	5.0	7.1	55.0	52.1	84.7	83.5
Northern Territory	12.6	11.9	31.0	26.4	7.1	6.9	49.3	54.8	38.1	32.7
ACT	16.4	17.3	33.0	27.5	11.6	11.7	39.0	43.5	53.1	53.3
<i>Australia</i>	<i>11.0</i>	<i>12.0</i>	<i>29.4</i>	<i>28.3</i>	<i>8.4</i>	<i>8.1</i>	<i>51.2</i>	<i>51.6</i>	<i>3085.9</i>	<i>3102.8</i>

Sources: ABS (1994:4) Table 1.2; ABS (1997:14) Table 4.

Changes in patterns of child-care arrangements also varied between the states and territories. In Western Australia, the Northern Territory and Tasmania, for instance, the use of formal child-care declined between 1993 and 1996. In Western Australia and the Northern Territory, an associated decrease in the use of informal care and an increase in parental arrangements indicates the withdrawal of a parent (usually the mother) from the labour force. In Tasmania, where the use of informal arrangements

increased and the proportion of children using only parental arrangements also decreased, the change can be attributed to a lack of available and/or affordable formal child-care spaces.

In South Australia and the Australian Capital Territory the proportion of children using both formal and informal care stayed more or less the same. Indeed, South Australia witnessed little change to its proportional distribution of child-care arrangements between 1993 and 1996. In New South Wales the use of combined non-parental care increased. This was associated with an increase in formal care and a decrease in informal arrangements, though no corresponding change in the use of parental care. This suggests that New South Wales experienced growth in the availability and/or affordability of formal child-care spaces from 1993 to 1996. This contrasts with the shift displayed in child-care arrangements in the A.C.T. which suggest that although there was some growth in the availability and/or affordability of regulated child-care spaces there was a diminished need for supplementary child-care arrangements. The latter is most likely labour force related, though changes to maternity and parental leave entitlements may also be partly responsible.

Recent comparable data is unavailable for Canada. However, data from the 1988 Canadian Child Care Study provides an indication of provincial/territorial differences and data on regulated child-care spaces in the provinces and territories in 1995 allows for a rough estimation of current formal child-care usage and changes that have taken place during the best part of the last decade.

Table 6.13: Proportion of Children Using Formal, Informal and Parental Child-Care Arrangements by Province, Canada, 1988 & 1995*.

PROVINCE/ TERRITORY	FORMAL CARE	INFORMAL CARE	PARENTAL CARE
Newfoundland	0.0	45.5	30.1
Nova Scotia	2.9	49.2	31.4
Prince Edward Island	3.0	45.9	38.3
New Brunswick	0.0	37.5	25.8
Quebec	14.4	50.1	27.2
Ontario	11.3	45.6	32.0
Manitoba	4.4	33.4	39.9
Saskatchewan	3.6	45.5	35.6
Alberta	10.7	37.9	38.0
British Columbia	0.0	47.9	36.5
Yukon	na	na	na
Northwest Territories	na	na	na
Canada	6.3	43.3	32.2

*1995 data for Formal Care is the proportion of children 0-12 years for whom there is a formal child-care space. 1995 data for Informal Care and Parental Care arrangements are estimations based on changes to Formal Care: if the proportion of use of Formal Care arrangements increases then Informal Care is estimated to decrease by that proportion while Parental Care is estimated to be unchanged, if Formal

Care decreases then Parental Care is estimated to increase by one third of the change in proportion to Formal Care while Informal Care is estimated to increase by two thirds of the proportional change. Percentages do not add up to 100% due to a small number of children (6-12 year olds) who care for themselves while their parents are working, training or studying.

Source: CNCCS, 1992: Table 4.24; CRRU (1997) Table 3.

As Table 6.13 illustrates, the use of formal, informal and, to a lesser extent, parental care arrangements varies from province to province. In 1988, some provinces displayed little or no formal child-care usage while in others ten percent or more of the child population used formal child-care arrangements (i.e., Ontario and Quebec). For instance, Saskatchewan had negligible regulated care in 1988, but by 1995, there were spaces for 4.3 percent of the child population. By comparison, Prince Edward Island had spaces for 15.5 percent of children 0-12 years of age in 1995 having increased the proportion for whom there were available spaces from 3 percent.

Few provinces and territories experienced similar changes in child-care arrangement patterns between 1988 and 1995. The Maritime Provinces (i.e., Newfoundland, Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick), British Columbia and Manitoba, for example, experienced a rise in the number of available regulated spaces and corresponding increases in the use of formal care arrangements. The provinces that had displayed the highest formal child-care usage in 1988 witnessed a decline in the proportion of children for whom there were regulated spaces. This included Ontario, which, as revealed in Chapter V, had experienced severe cutbacks throughout the early 1990s that collectively had a devastating effect on the availability and affordability of child-care in the province. Formal child-care in Alberta was similarly effected, whereas child-care in Quebec suffered primarily as a consequence of sweeping economic rationalism and a government preoccupation with deficit reduction.

The Australian data indicates that the use of informal care and, to a lesser extent, parental child-care arrangements are effected by changes in the availability of formal spaces. That is, if there is an increase in the availability and/or affordability of regulated spaces then the use of informal arrangements would be expected to rise (given no change in the proportion of children using parental care only). Conversely, if there was a fall in the use of formal care arrangements, it would be expected that the use of informal and/or parental arrangements would increase. This is assuming stability in labour force participation rates of parents, particularly of mothers with young children. Shifts in the labour market, however, do influence child-care arrangements. It is nonetheless beyond the scope of this study to estimate the extent to which

changes in the labour market have effected child-care patterns in Canada. Suffice to say, that the variations in child-care arrangements are a reflection of the disparate employment, economic and political conditions in each province and reflect child-care's status as a provincial concern for which the federal government has increasingly devolved its spending powers.

Summary

The demand for child-care in Canada and Australia has increased throughout the 1990s and is expected to continue to do so into the foreseeable future. The supply of formal child-care spaces has, however, not kept up with the demand, particularly in Canada. Moreover, the shrinking of the gap between the supply of and demand for formal child-care in Australia has been dependent upon federal government intervention. As will be seen in the following chapter, the Commonwealth government in Australia supports child-care both directly and indirectly, giving priority to the employment needs of parents. Demand for formal child-care is, nonetheless, also related to the personal needs of parents and used for the benefits it provides for the child. In addition, it was seen to be influenced by the availability and affordability of these kind of care arrangements.

An examination of the availability, affordability, and use of formal care arrangements demonstrate that these factors have an impact on individual and overall patterns of child-care arrangements. Despite the growth of formal care spaces, particularly in Australia as a function of the federal government's national child-care strategies, at least half of all children under 12 years of age in both countries are cared for exclusively by their parents, mainly by the mother. Even where the mother participates in the labour force and supplementary care arrangements are utilised, it is characteristically the mother who assumes responsibility for and undertakes the majority of the child-care. Further, informal arrangements remain the dominant form of non-parental care used by Australian and Canadian families, despite policies aimed at improving the availability and affordability of formal child-care spaces. Indeed, informal arrangements prevail where there is a lack of available and affordable formal/regulated child-care. Informal care is typically less expensive than formal care, especially for very young children (i.e., babies and toddlers), and is often provided by relatives in an unpaid arrangement.

Variations in patterns of child-care arrangements were found to be related to the age

of the child and to family characteristics. For instance, very young children are more likely to be in an informal arrangement than in formal care. Those who used formal child-care were over represented by higher income couple families who reside in major cities and whose main language at home is English. Those under-represented included single parent families, those who live in rural or small urban areas, those whose main language at home is other than English, and middle income families. It thus appears that policies aimed at enhancing equity have only been partially effective. Moreover, the priority of access for work-related needs, while enhancing the economic participation of women, has impinged upon the social rights of others. For this reason, the provision of formal child-care in Australia has come to be viewed as occupational welfare (Jamrozik and Sweeney, 1994).

Despite the many similarities in the patterns of child-care arrangements in Australia and Canada, there are a few obvious differences. For example, the variation in availability and affordability of formal child-care across Canada is more extensive than it is in Australia. This is principally a function of the funding mechanisms in both countries, and of the existence of a national child-care strategy only in Australia. As was illustrated in Chapter V and will be explained further in the following chapter, child-care in Canada is dependent, for the most part, upon the policies and actions of provincial governments and on their willingness to enter into cost-sharing agreements with the federal government. In contrast, the Commonwealth government in Australia plays a significant role in the funding of children's services and in assisting families with the financial costs of caring for their children.

CHAPTER VII

SHIFTING SUPPORT: DIRECT AND INDIRECT GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE FOR PARENTAL AND NON-PARENTAL CHILD-CARE ARRANGEMENTS.

Introduction

The rationale for government involvement in the provision of formal child-care services in Australia and in Canada has been to make child-care accessible. Accessible child-care constitutes both available and affordable spaces for the children of families who need and/or want child-care, regardless of family type, income level and other socio-economic characteristics. In both countries, there appears to be some social and political acceptance that government revenue should cover some of the costs associated with the provision of child-care services and that families using child-care services should also directly contribute (Wangmann, 1995; Friendly, 1994; EPAC, 1996).

Governments support various child-care arrangements either directly, indirectly or in some combination of both. Government directed funding for the establishment, maintenance, and operation of regulated child-care places supports formal child-care arrangements. Governments also directly support informal and parental child-care arrangements through the provision of child-care subsidies, child-care tax rebates and child-care related benefits such as Childcare Assistance and Parenting Allowance. Indirect government funding for formal, informal and parental child-care arrangements is provided in the form of family and child-care benefits, through taxation and funding of employment and education policies. This is essentially aimed at helping families meet the costs of raising and caring for their children, including the costs inherent in balancing work and family responsibilities. Direct government support in the form of capital and operational grants for child-care centres primarily deals with the issue of child-care availability. Subsidies, taxation concessions, family and child-care benefits, and other indirect forms of government funding are mostly related to the child-care component paid as fees by families and are thus closely associated with the issue of affordability.

This chapter investigates the ways in which governments in Canada and Australia have supported child-care financially during the past decade. Both direct and indirect measures governments have taken, are currently pursuing, and are planning to take in the future, are investigated. This incorporates a discussion of the funding mechanisms

and the allocation of responsibility for child-care between various levels of government in each country. The purpose is to reveal how these institutional structures influence child-care policy and may impact upon the demand, availability, affordability and patterns of child-care arrangements as identified in the previous chapter.

Direct Government Funding for Child-Care in Australia

Government in Australia meets around 60 percent of total paid child-care costs (EPAC, 1996:16). In 1972, with the introduction of the Child Care Act¹, the Australian Commonwealth Government began funding formal child-care services through the Children's Services Program in partnership with either the States and Territories, local government or community organisations. State and Territory governments contribute to costs incurred by government agencies in inspecting premises under licensing arrangements and fund a range of child-care programs, including grants for support and advisory services. Local governments provide assistance by contributing land and administrative support for child-care centres. Nonetheless, the Children's Services Program remains the main mechanism for direct government funding of child-care in Australia.

Table 7.1: Major Sources of Funds for Child-Care Services (\$m)

CHILD-CARE EXPENDITURE	1994-95	1995-96	1996-97 ^a	1997-98 ^b
COMMONWEALTH			\$ million	
Capital grants, loans ^c	15	11	31	22
Operational subsidies	126	132	153	116
Childcare Assistance	605	657	747	801
Childcare Cash Rebate	90	121	124	135
Special Services & Program Support	70	71	86	93
<i>Total</i>	<i>906</i>	<i>991</i>	<i>1140</i>	<i>1166</i>
STATE / TERRITORY				
Capital / operating subsidies	100	100	na	na
Pre-schools	300	305	na	na
<i>Total</i>	<i>400</i>	<i>405</i>	<i>na</i>	<i>na</i>

^a Budget estimate. ^b Forecast. ^c Loans net of repayments.

Sources: Commonwealth Budget Statements 1996-97; EPAC (1996:17).

The mix of funding, or more precisely the distribution of taxpayers money, is complex (Wangmann, 1995: 27), as indicated by the various Budget items listed in Table 7.1².

1 Excerpts from the Child Care Act is provided by Wilson, Thomson and McMahon (1996) in their edited book *The Australian Welfare State: Key Documents and Themes*. See Brennan (1996), in that volume for a discussion of the Child Care Act.

2 This complexity of financial arrangements for the funding of children's services was highlighted in the *Functional Review of Child Care: Report of the Working Group* (1991).

This is because the types of services and funding arrangements vary between States and Territories. At present, direct funding for child-care is provided by the Commonwealth as either capital or recurrent funding. Capital funding is provided for the development of infrastructure for community-based services and for specialty services such as Multifunctional Aboriginal Children's Services (MACS), multifunctional centres in rural and remote areas, play groups, toy libraries and mobile services. Recurrent funding assists providers and users with their ongoing costs.

In the 1995-96 Budget government directed funding for child-care was provided in six main ways: capital grants for not-for-profit services (\$24 million); operational grants for not-for-profit services (\$137 million); subsidies for special services (\$83 million); Child-care Assistance - means tested subsidies in the form of fee relief for formal child-care services (\$745 million); Childcare Cash Rebate - non-means tested subsidies to parents for expenditure on formal and informal child-care services (\$118 million); and Parenting Allowance (July 1995) - means tested subsidies for parents providing own child-care services (\$2,235 million) (Abelson & Jones, 1996:45). In addition to these funds, the Commonwealth spent \$32 million on administration costs and provided \$9.3 billion for family benefit payments, while the States and Territories provided an extra \$100 million for child-care and \$300 million for pre-schools, as shown in Table 6.8. The total Commonwealth outlay on family and child-care support in 1995-96 was \$12,626 million, 250 percent more than the \$4,979 million spent in 1985-86 (Mitchell, 1997:7)³.

Operational grants were, until recently, provided to community-based long day care centres, family day care coordination units run by local governments or by community groups on a non-profit basis; community-managed and non-profit outside school hours services including 'year-round' models; and community -managed occasional care services run on a non-profit basis. Subsidies for community-based services vary with circumstances, with the basic subsidy rates ranging from \$15.10 to \$22.0 per place per week (EPAC, 1996:15). On 1 July 1997, however, operational subsidies for

3 In 1985/86 the AFCP included Family Allowances (\$2563.2m), Family Income Supplement (\$82.3m), Children's Services (\$244.2m), Orphans Pension (\$6.5m) and Other expenditures (\$19.2m). This was combined with the Supporting Parent Payments (\$2063.7m). In 1995/96, the AFCP consisted of Basic Family Payment (\$2118.1m), Additional Family Payment (\$3679.7m), Child Care Services (\$1107.5m), Other Cash Payments (\$218.7m), and Other expenditures (\$487.1m). This was combined with the Supporting Parent Payments (\$2685.6m), Home Child Care Allowances (\$3.0m), Parenting Allowance (\$2235.0m), Child Care Rebate (\$14.0m), and Maternity Allowance (\$78.1m) (Budget Paper No.1, 1985, 1995 as reported by Mitchell, 1997:7).

community-based long day care were removed in accordance with the Howard Government's 1996/97 Budget.

Building and equipment costs for new community-based child-care places have usually been shared by the Commonwealth with a State or Territory. The degree of support has been based on assessments made as part of the national planning process. Interest free loans of up to 50 percent of the capital costs were also available to not-for-profit providers for the establishment of new child-care places and for extensions of existing facilities before the 1996/97 Budget. The Commonwealth also provides block grants to State and Territory governments for distribution to vacation care services. The level of Commonwealth funding and involvement of the different levels of government and of non-government organisations in the administration of Commonwealth funded child-care services across Australia is clearly seen in Appendix R: Federal Funding (CSP) for Major Child-Care Service Types by Type of Expenditure and Service Type by State/Territory, 1991-92.

The Commonwealth also provides funds of up to \$90 million per year for Special Services and Program Support. Programs receiving special services subsidies are targeted at groups with special needs including children from non-English speaking backgrounds, children with a disability, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, and sole parents re-entering the workforce. Program research and development including the national accreditation system and a range of small activities are included under Program Support.

Capital and operational grants and subsidies for special services subsidise the supply of services. In their evaluation of supply side subsidies, Abelson and Jones (1996) noted that capital subsidies increase the supply of child-care services, are cost-effective and help build up infrastructure in child-care services. On the other hand, capital subsidies are seen to be discriminatory, are not subject to market disciplines and are less able to be targeted to those in need than are grants to individuals. The advantage of operational subsidies is their potential to reduce the cost of child-care services to all parents. Abelson and Jones, however, refer to economic market theory that suggests this is unlikely for a 'non-profit making monopolist' which is likely to have higher resource costs than are private sector providers, and is likely to be less efficient. They cite research that indicates that the average costs of community-based centres are higher than those of private centres, although concede that higher community costs and fees may reflect higher quality or more costly services such as

greater provision for the under three year old age group. The Special Services and Program Support subsidies were not evaluated. It was, nonetheless, acknowledged that operational subsidies of this type may be needed to meet less commercially attractive community needs, to provide services where unsubsidised services are not viable, such as providing child-care for children with special needs (i.e., children from non-English speaking backgrounds, children with a disability, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders children), and programs for sole parents (i.e., the Jobs, Employment, Education (JET) program. Universal public provision of child-care services as an extension of the current Australian wide primary school system was presented as an alternative supply-side option 'worthy of detailed consideration' (Abelson & Jones, 1996:70). Universal child-care would enhance the integration of child-care and development services for three and four year olds and like the school system could allow for private as well as public provision. A one-stop child-care service, regarded as an inefficient and unresponsive monopoly, was also proposed as a possible option for high demand areas. Demand side subsidies were presented as more preferable, not in the least because identified market failures were failures of demand rather than of supply.

In contrast, to capital grants, operational and special services subsidies, Childcare Assistance, Childcare Cash Rebate and the Parenting Allowance subsidises the demand for, or use of, services. Childcare Assistance is paid to the providers of federally funded community-based long day care services, family day care services, occasional care services, approved private-for-profit, employer-sponsored and other non-profit long day care centres and some pre-schools, on behalf of individual parents who have lodged a claim form with the Department of Social Security. It is aimed at reducing child-care costs for low and middle income families, and to enable women to undertake paid work. The long day care rate of Childcare Assistance is means-tested on family income and assets, and is thus reduced according to family circumstances. The maximum assistance in 1996 for a family earning less than \$476 per week (plus a family payment of \$30 per week for each child) was \$1.92 per hour for one child and \$4.17 per hour for two dependent children (EPAC, 1996:15). This equates to a cut in the cost of child-care by as much as 83%, after the first \$18.50 per week for one child and \$21 per week for two or more children in care is paid out of pocket. Assessment for single parent families is on the single earner's income plus child support payments. In 1997, families with a total weekly income up to \$1228 (\$63,856 per annum) with one child in care, \$1,440 (\$74,880 per annum) with two children in care, and \$1758

(\$91,416 per annum) with three or more children in care were eligible for Childcare Assistance⁴. A lower, more tightly targeted rate is available for outside school hours care, although this is expected to increase from 27 April 1998⁵. However, many services do not offer this assistance because of difficulties in administration (Law Reform Commission, 1994:47). Special Childcare Assistance can also be claimed by providers for families suffering severe short-term financial difficulty or for children who would otherwise be at risk when their families cannot or will not pay the fee (EPAC, 1996).

The Childcare Cash Rebate was introduced in July 1994 as a work related benefit⁶. It is a non-means tested subsidy that can be claimed for part of the cost of child-care used when the sole parent or both parents in a couple family are working, looking for work, studying or training⁷ (AIHW, 1997). Costs for formal care, including pre-schools, and informal care can be claimed if the care meets State or Territory standards and the carer is registered with Medicare and thus has an approved provider number. It is administered by the Health Insurance Commission through its Medicare centre⁸, and is payable, up to a limit, over and above the Childcare Assistance. In 1996, the Rebate covered 30 percent of costs over and above the first \$19 of total weekly child-care costs, if out-of-pocket expenses were less than \$115 for one child or \$230 for two or more children. A maximum claim could be made of \$28.80 for one child and \$63.30 for two or more children where child-care costs were equal to or exceeded the given out-of-pocket child-care costs. As of 7 April 1997, the 30 percent rebate could be

⁴ In 1998 Childcare Assistance is paid to families who pass an family assets test set at less than \$460,000 and an income test set at \$1,265 per week (\$65,780 per year) before tax for one child in care, \$1,483 per week (\$77,116 per year) for two children both in care, and \$1,810 per week (\$94,120 per year) for three or more children in care.

⁵ Other changes to child-care payments that will commence on 27 April 1998 include: payments being made through a one stop shop called Centrelink; parents being asked to provide information to Centrelink on changes that may affect their payments including changes in amount of child-care charged for, income, and work status; and children under the age of 7 in care having to be immunised or the family having to obtained a medical or concientious objection exemption to maintain eligibility for Childcare Assistance and the Childcare Rebate (Commonwealth Government, 1998: Cat 001.9801).

⁶ The guidelines were broadened in January 1995 to all for the coverage of the following approved absences: illness of a parent, child or sibling; non-immunisation of a child; holidays of a parent or child; or parents working rotating shifts, parents rostered days off and public holidays (Health Insurance Commission, 1995).

⁷ Documents confirming child-care costs are work-related are required for each Rebate recipient when the claim is first made and need to be available when the claim is checked at random once a year (Health Insurance Commission, 1996.)

⁸ As of 27 April 1998, the Childcare Rebate will be paid direct to parents' preferred bank, credit union or building socieity account rather than through Medicare.

claimed only by families with a family income below the Family Tax Initiative (FTI) cut-off of \$70,000 for families with one child plus \$3000 for each additional child⁹. The maximum benefits were also reduced to \$28.65 for one child and \$63.15 for two or more children in care. The rebate for families with a family income above the FTI cut-offs was reduced to 20 percent of claimable child-care costs with a maximum of \$19.10 for one child and \$42.10 for two or more children (Health Insurance Commission, 1997).

The Parenting Allowance, introduced in July 1995, replaced the Home Child Care and Partner Allowances that came into effect a year earlier in replacement of the Dependent Spouse Rebate for spouses who cared for children. This payment, paid to the stay-at-home parent, is aimed at assisting low income, single income couple families with the cost of rearing their children (Department of Social Security, June 1995). The Basic Parenting Allowance (BPA) is based on the stay-at-home parents income and provides a maximum benefit of \$31.40 per week¹⁰. The Additional Parenting Allowance (APA) is means tested on household income and provides up to \$136 per week. Thus, eligible parents can receive up to \$167.40 per week in parenting allowance.

In their commissioned report for the EPAC Child Care Task Force, Abelson and Jones (1996) identify and evaluate three main kinds of demand-side subsidies: aid tied to expenditure on child-care, subsidised prices for child-care services, and untied aid to families with children. The Childcare Cash Rebate, tax concessions and the Parenting Allowance are given as examples of aid tied to expenditure on child-care. These demand side subsidies are seen to have the advantages of being able to increase expenditure on child-care by most families including those who would otherwise spend very little on child-care, increase the affordability of child-care services, and effectively target assistance to those most in need. Tax concessions were nevertheless presented as non-transparent and regressive, providing greater benefits for higher income earners and little or no benefit for low income earners. The Childcare Cash Rebate was criticised for being unmeans-tested, administratively costly and discriminating against non-working parents. Further, the Childcare Cash Rebate

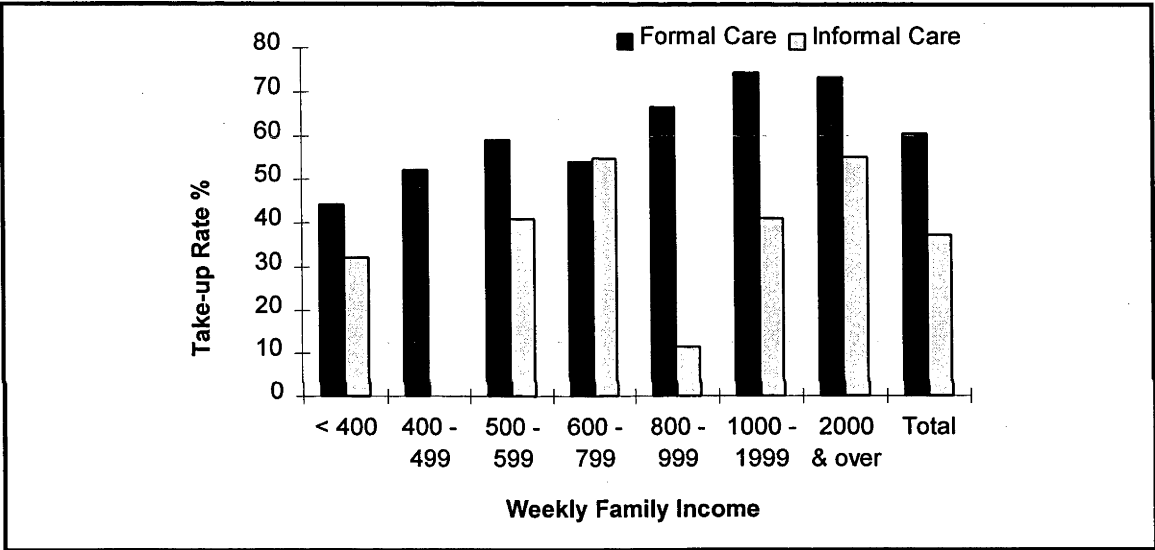
⁹ Evidence from the Department of Social Security proving a family income is below the FTI cut-offs must be submitted if the higher rate is to be received.

¹⁰ Rate as at July 1996.

appears not to have been claimed by those for whom it was intended.

As Figure 7.1 illustrates, the take up rate of the Childcare Cash Rebate in 1996 by low income families was only 44.3 percent for those using formal care and 32.1 percent for those using informal care compared to averages of 60.5 percent and 37.2 percent, respectively, for all income groups (ABS, 1997:23). Respondents who indicated that they did not claim the Childcare Cash Rebate because they were not aware of the rebate accounted for 30,900 families or 42.2 percent of those using informal care (ABS, 1997:24). Forty-four percent or 32, 200 of families using informal care did not claim the rebate because their carer was not registered.

Figure 7.1: Use of Childcare Cash Rebate By Weekly Family Income, Australia, 1996.



Source: ABS (1997: 23) Table 13.

Childcare Assistance is given as an example of subsidised prices for child-care services. It has the advantages of providing inducements to parents to increase the amount of child-care services they purchase and improving child-care affordability. This form of demand-side subsidy was identified as having several disadvantages: a bias towards some forms of services creating difficulty for achieving neutrality; difficulties and anomalies when new services are provided; reduced incentives to cost containment; poor targeting ability; high administrative costs; and monitoring difficulties. Demand-side subsidies, untied aid to families with children such as the Basic Family Payment, are aimed at improving equity outcomes. However, as Abelson and Jones point out, this form of financial support on its own 'does not protect the interests of the children or of society in child care services' (1996:62). They thus argue that untied aid needs to be supplemented by some form of tied aid for child-care or

subsidised prices for services or both and propose a Child Care Benefit Payment as the way forward.

The proposed Child Care Benefit Payment was taken up, in part, by the EPAC Child Care Task Force in its recommendations for a Child Care Benefit. In keeping with Abelson and Jones evaluation of supply-side and demand-side subsidies the Task Force was of the view that

in the future, government financial support for child care should mainly be in the form of per capita subsidies which follow families and children rather than supply side subsidies which reduce the direct costs of particular forms of care. (1996:56)

The Task Force considered that such assistance should be both means tested and subjected to limits on the number of hours of assisted care, emphasising that its approach was motivated by a desire to ensure better targeting of assistance to those most in need. Criticism that such a demand-side subsidy would undermine the quality of care was rejected by the Task Force:

[u]nder its proposal, all forms of non-parental, paid child care will be eligible for subsidy, but if, and only if, the provider implements required quality assurance arrangements. (1996:56)

Thus the Task Force recommended that the Commonwealth Government should replace the Childcare Assistance scheme, the Childcare Cash Rebate, general capital and operating subsidies, and general Fringe Benefit Tax exemptions for employer-sponsored child-care with the proposed Child Care Benefit. Further, the Task Force recommended that the 'Child Care Benefit should be paid for all forms of non-parental care where a provider implements specified quality assurance requirements' (1996:57).

While the Howard Government has taken on board a number of the Task Force recommendations, it is unlikely that it will extend subsidies to all forms of paid non-parental child-care and tie it to compulsory quality assurance. Both Coalition Budgets provide an indication of a government shift away from supply-side to demand-side subsidies, particularly the most recent Budget.

In the 1996/97 Budget the Federal Government stated that it was 'supporting its child care commitments to families at an estimated cost of \$5 billion over the next four years' and that outlays in child care would be increased by \$154 million from \$1,013 million in 1995-96 to about \$1,167 million in 1996-97 (Commonwealth Government, 1996:3). Of the proposed \$1,167 million for 1996-97, \$526 million was marked for operational subsidies, \$31 million for special needs children, \$12.5 million for severely

disadvantaged families, \$10.9 million for rural and remote and special needs capital funding, and \$8.3 million for assisting community long day care centres to overcome the loss of the untargeted operational subsidy. While the Childcare Cash Rebate accounted for the increase in expenditure in 1995-96, other measures implemented by the Government generated \$546 million in savings. These measures included the capping of Childcare Assistance at 50 hours per week for one child (\$106 million), the removal of operational subsidies from community-based long day care centres (\$108 million), the reduction in Childcare Cash Rebate, a two year freeze on Childcare Assistance and Childcare Cash Rebate payments (\$84.7 million), a lowering of Childcare Assistance income cut off points (\$13 million), the abolition of additional income levels allowed for each dependent child when assessing eligibility for Childcare Assistance (\$77.5 million), and paying Childcare Assistance and the Childcare Cash Rebate directly to parents (\$2.5 million) (Budget Paper No.1, 1996).

In the 1997/98 Budget, child-care was pared by \$321 million over four years. This was despite provisions for an extra \$1 million for the play-group sector, a \$10.8 million boost in funding for family day care, and an increase of \$9.5 million for rural and remote community-based long day care. Savings would be made by capping the number of new subsidised places in the next two years at 7000 (\$207 million), by capping fee assistance for children of non-working parents at 20 hours a week (\$77 million), by cutting advance payments of fee assistance to child-care services (\$38.8 million), and by streamlining a number of particular children's programs, including the Special Services and the Special Needs Subsidy Scheme into a single 'broadband' (\$22.8 million) (Budget Paper No.1 1997).

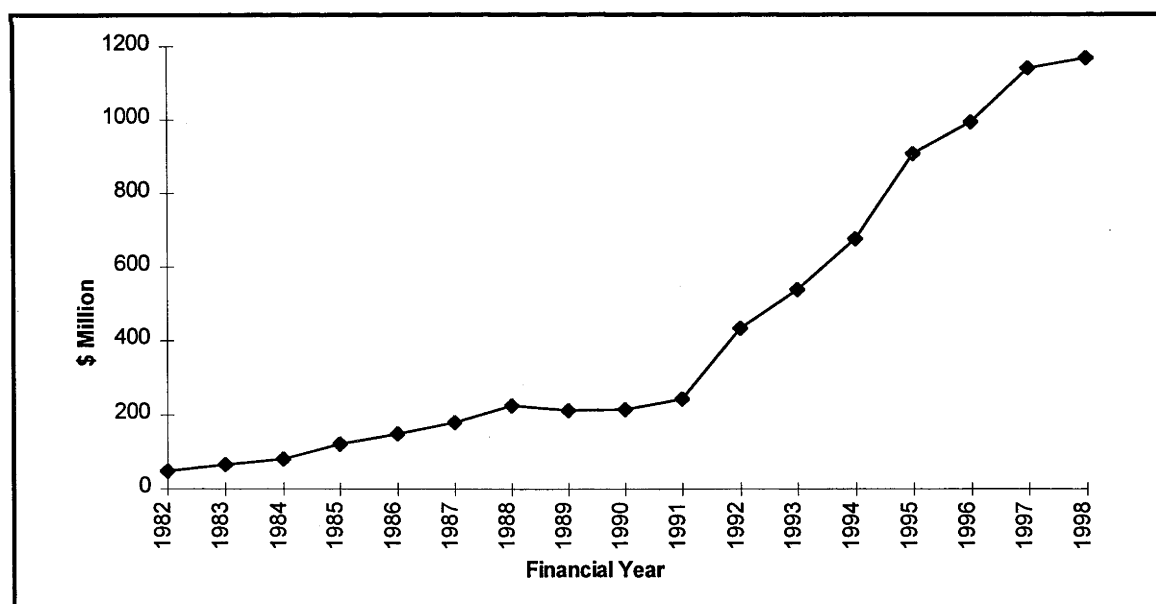
As Figure 7.2 illustrates, Government expenditure on child-care in Australia has increased significantly over the past fifteen years; 843 percent since 1985/86. While the 1980s witnessed a steady rise in Commonwealth outlays on child-care, the 1990s has been a period of rapid growth. The extension of Childcare Assistance subsidies to children receiving care in private centres¹¹, as previously mentioned, was a major contributing factor to the six-fold increase since 1991.

¹¹ The average per capita Childcare Assistance in 1996 was close to 20 percent higher for private long day care (\$1841) than for community long day care (\$1579). Moreover, the Department of Health and Family Services found that 44 percent of families using private, employer and non-profit long day care centres received the maximum Childcare Assistance compared to 39 percent of families using community-based centres (EPAC, 1996:18). This suggests, that on average, incomes of families using community long day care are higher than those for families using private long day care.

This increase in Commonwealth expenditure on child-care has been accompanied by a shift away from supply-side program support such as capital and operating grants to demand-side income support delivered via subsidies such as Childcare Assistance and the Childcare Cash Rebate. Indeed, in the 1994/95 financial year just over three-quarters of total Federal spending went to fee relief. The 1997/98 Budget puts demand-side subsidies in excess of 80 percent of total Commonwealth child-care spending (refer back to Table 7.1). It has been justified in terms of providing equity, efficiency, and increased parental choice. However, as Eva Cox has noted, '[t]his leaves the Commonwealth with relatively little power to influence the supply and direction of new services' (1996:96). Moreover, she warns that if the Commonwealth Government continues on its path to restrict program support to special services

[t]here is serious danger that community-based services may end up with primarily priority children and become stigmatised as the UK centres are. ... If middle income range families with children cannot get into child care because there are too few places and they are not the first priorities, or because they do not have immediate work related needs, the program will always be seen as not part of community infrastructure, but as serving the different and deviant. This militates against the interests of children as well as the concept of the public sector servicing civil society and creates divides rather than links. (1996:105)

Figure 7.2: Growth of Australian Commonwealth Government Expenditure 1982-1997.



* Formal child-care includes all regulated care away from the child's home including pre-school. Figures in brackets indicate the number of children using Commonwealth funded child-care only which excludes those attending pre-schools which are funded by the States and Territories.

**Adjusted to \$1989-90.

(a) Budget Estimates from 1997

(b) Forecast for 1998

Sources: Brennan (1994: 203); EPAC (1996:17); AIHW (1997).

Direct Child-Care Funding in Australia: A Summary

Child-care funding in Australia is largely a federal concern. Federal funds subsidise both the supply of services and the demand, or use of, services. Subsidies for the supply of services, such as capital and operational grants, are currently being phased out, despite the protests of community-based child-care organisations. Subsidies for the demand, or use, of services, considered to be more equitable, efficient, and able to increase parental choice, include Childcare Assistance, the Childcare Cash Rebate, and the Parenting Allowance. Childcare Assistance is aimed at reducing the cost of formal child-care for low and middle income families. It enables the women to undertake paid work. The Childcare Cash Rebate is a work related benefit. Along with Childcare Assistance, it promotes the commodification of women's labour. In contrast, the Parenting Allowance is aimed at helping stay-at-home parents in low income, single income couple families meet the costs of child rearing. It acknowledges, though does not compensate, the loss of income that would have been earned if the stay-at-home parent were participating in the labour force.

Federal child-care expenditure has grown rapidly throughout the 1990's. This growth is presently being curtailed by the current Coalition government. Consequently, eligibility requirements for Childcare Assistance and the Childcare Cash Rebate have been tightened and the replacement of Childcare Assistance with a child-care tax concession has been discussed.

Indirect Government Funding for Child-Care in Australia

The Commonwealth Government also provides indirect support for parental and non-parental child-care arrangements through the provision of family benefits and tax policies. The variety of payments made to families with children is listed in Table 7.2 (overleaf). The Family Payment, which amounted to 45 percent of Commonwealth assistance to families with children in 1996, is a non-taxable means tested payment to families with dependent children under the age of 16 years and for certain full-time dependent students aged 16 to 18 years. In previous years, the two components of the Family Payment - minimum rate and more than minimum rate - were itemised as the Basic Family Payment and Additional Family Payment.

The minimum rate of \$23.40 per child per fortnight is payable to families with dependent children with taxable family incomes up to \$64,000. An additional amount is paid to low income families at a rate of \$96.00 per fortnight for children aged 0 to 12

years and \$124.90 for children aged 13 to 15 years if the taxable family income is less than \$23,350 for one child, \$23,974 for two children, \$24,598 for three children, \$25,222 for four children and an additional \$624 for each extra child thereafter. The Family Payment may also include Rent Assistance, Guardian Allowance, Large Family Supplement and/or Multiple Birth Allowance.

Table: 7.2: Commonwealth Assistance to Families With Children, Australia.

ASSISTANCE TYPE	1995/96 ^a	1996/97 ^b	1997/98 ^c
		\$million	
Family Payments	5877.7	6153.9	6256.2
Sole Parent Pensions and Allowances	2760.1	2906.7	3008.2
Family Tax Payment	-	239.0	479.0
Other Child Payments	215.3	230.1	245.7
Parenting Allowance	2091.3	2182.5	2198.6
Maternity Allowance	65.2	187.3	191.6
Child Care	990.6	1140.1	1166.2
Child Care Cash Rebate - HIC Running Costs	14.0	14.0	12.9
Other	496.0	604.3	646.4
<i>Total</i>	<i>12510.2</i>	<i>13658.0</i>	<i>14204.7</i>

^aActual ^bBudget ^cEstimate

Source: Budget Paper No.1 (1996).

The Family Tax Payment (FTP) is a component of the Howard Government's Family Tax Initiative introduced in January 1997. It is a fortnightly non-taxable cash payment administered by the Department of Social Security to the value of \$7.70 per child. It is aimed at assisting low income families who are eligible for more than the minimum Family Payment and who would otherwise not benefit from the Family Tax Assistance component of the Family Tax Initiative¹². Eligible families include single and couple families with one child with a taxable income of less than \$27,125, and families with two children with taxable incomes of less than \$31,525. Sole parents and couple families where one partner has an income of less than \$175.43 per fortnight can get an extra \$19.24 per fortnight per family if they have at least one child under five years of age.

Assistance to families also includes other payments made to sole parents, mothers of new babies, parents of disabled children, orphans and parents balancing work and

¹² The Family Tax Assistance, administered by the Australian Taxation Office, is a two part tax benefit available to families with dependent children. Part A, which is means-tested on family income, may increase a family's tax-free threshold by up to \$1000 per year for each dependent child. It is equivalent of a \$200 tax reduction. Part B, which is means-tested separately on individual incomes, is an additional benefit for families who have one main income earner and at least one dependent child under 5 years of age. The addition of up to \$2500 per year for a family to the tax-free threshold is equivalent to a tax reduction of up to \$500 per year. See Australian Taxation Office (1996) pamphlet NAT 2473.12.96.

family responsibilities. The Sole Parent Pension is a means tested payment for single parent families with a dependent child under 16 years of age. Combined with Sole Parent Allowances, the Sole Parent Pension amounts to 21 percent of the Commonwealth budget for assistance to families. While it has not resolved the issue of poverty among sole mothers it 'has allowed mothers some choice to care for their children at home or to enter the labour force, and has also permitted them to receive the Sole Parent Pension and work part-time' (Baker, 1996:14). The Maternity Allowance, introduced in February 1996, is a non-taxable, lump sum payment of \$816 for each new child born into families eligible for the minimum rate Family Payment. The Child Disability Allowance and Double Orphan Pension are non-means tested and non-taxable payments made fortnightly with Family Payments. The Parenting Allowance, as previously discussed, has a non-taxable and a taxable component and is paid to spouses who stay-at-home to care for children under 16 years age. It amounts to 16 percent of the Commonwealth's budget for assistance to families with children compared to 8.4 percent budgeted for child-care, including administrative costs.

Table: 7.3: Assistance to Families With Children in Australia as a Proportion of Commonwealth Social Security and Welfare Spending, Total Commonwealth Outlays, and GDP.

FINANCIAL YEAR	ASSISTANCE TO FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN	COMMONWEALTH EXPENDITURE AS A PROPORTION OF SOCIAL SECURITY & WELFARE	TOTAL OUTLAYS	GDP
	<i>\$millions</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>%</i>
1987/88	4998.8	22.25	6.347	1.771
1990/91	5516.6	18.05	5.744	1.459
1991/92	6707.1	18.97	6.535	1.763
1992/93	7828.1	20.37	7.154	1.983
1993/94	8923.7	21.24	7.800	2.143
1994/95	10,432.3	23.84	8.521	2.347
1995/96	12,510.2	26.79	9.873	2.646
1996/97	13,658.0	27.93	10.532	2.724

Source: Budget Paper No.1 (1987-1996).

Commonwealth expenditure on assistance for families with children has almost tripled during the past decade. The increase in payments to families throughout the 1990s is presented in Table 7.3 as a proportion of Gross Domestic Product, Social Security and Welfare spending and Total Government outlays. It can be seen that although expenditure rose from \$4,998.8 million in 1987 to \$5516.6 million in 1990 this represented a decline in family payments as a proportion (4.2%) of Commonwealth outlays on Social Security and Welfare. Since 1990, payments to families to help them raise and care for their children have continued to rise, reaching \$13,658.0 million in

1996 or 27.93 percent of total Commonwealth Social Security and Welfare spending. In other words, assistance to families with children has increased from 1.46 percent to 2.72 percent of the Gross Domestic Product which represents a growth of 4.79 percent of total Government outlays.

The Table does not include benefits to families received indirectly through the taxation system. For instance, in 1987 and 1990, the equivalent of the Parenting Allowance was the tax rebate for dependent spouses with children, worth about \$450 million in 1987/88 and \$700 million in 1990/91 (Abelson & Jones, 1996:57). If these figures were included payments to families would have amounted to 1.9% of GDP in 1987/88 and 1.6% in 1990/91. Some families have also benefited from the Fringe Benefits Tax Exemption received by many employers who have provided or sponsored child-care for their employees. Tax concessions for child-care have been canvassed in Australia since 1972, and although both Liberal and Labour Governments have replaced tax concessions with benefits over the past two decades, the Howard Government's Family Tax Assistance component of the Family Tax Initiative is an indication of a return to tax concessions in the future. Earlier indications of this shift included the Coalition's 1990 child-care rebate proposal and the Taxation Institute of Australia's 1992 submission to the Commonwealth Government arguing for either rebates or full tax deductibility for child-care (Wangmann, 1995).

Three forms of tax concessions are generally debated in relation to child-care (Wangmann, 1995). Tax deductions are taken from gross income and effectively reduce the amount of income tax payable. Tax rebates are deducted from the tax liability after income tax is calculated on gross income. If the rebate is larger than the tax liability then the difference can be claimed. Tax credits are fixed dollar amounts that reduce the tax liability. If the credit exceeds the tax liability then the difference is refunded to the taxpayer.

While tax credits are considered more equitable than tax rebates with both being more equitable than tax deductions¹³, all forms of tax concessions for child-care costs are regressive (NATSEM, 1996). They are of no benefit to those on low incomes and of little benefit to part-time and casual workers and others whose income is close to the

¹³ See Wangmann (1995:60) for an illustration of the comparative benefits of these three methods and NATSEM (1996) for an analysis of the impact of a tax rebate and tax deduction on government expenditure on child-care and the disposable incomes of families.

tax threshold. They do not present any advantages over a payment benefit system (Abelson & Jones, 1996). Moreover, tax concessions for formal child-care costs do not provide a link between government financial support and high quality care (EPAC, 1996).

Indirect Government Funding for Child-Care in Australia: A Summary

In addition to direct child-care funding, the federal government of Australia provides assistance to families to help them meet the costs of rearing their children. Child-care is a child rearing cost, though it is not explicitly considered as such. The main form of assistance to families, until 1987, was provided in the form of a family allowance. This universal allowance was replaced by targeted family payments. More recently, these payments were replaced by a more tightly targeted Family Tax Payment and a Family Tax Assistance. Similar to changes in direct child-care funding, the shift from universal to increasingly targeted payments has been accompanied by a shift away from payments delivered through the social security system to tax concessions delivered through the taxation system. This shift continues despite research which has shown that tax concessions are regressive and have no clear advantages over the payment benefits system.

Direct Government Funding for Child-Care in Canada

A less extensive, though similar, funding mechanism to that in Australia used to be employed in Canada under the Canada Assistance Plan. However, as mentioned in Chapter V, the Canadian federal Government no longer has a role in earmarking child-care funds for those most in need, except for First Nations, Inuit and other indigenous Canadians. The new block funding mechanism, the Canadian Social and Health Transfer, has shifted the responsibility for the distribution of funds and the provision of social programs further onto the provinces and territories. It is the provinces and territories that must now determine who should pay for child-care, what they should pay for, how they should pay and how much they should pay, doing so in a climate of fiscal restraint. Indeed, election promises and government policies are frequently curtailed or undermined by a lack of funds. In Canada, regulated child-care services are supported by parent fees, federal government, provincial and territorial governments, and, in some provinces, municipal governments. Child-care advocates argue that because government funding has developed on an ad hoc basis, as a whole, it fails to support Canada's broad social or economic policy objectives, or, more

importantly, provide an adequate foundation for the development and maintenance of an accessible, affordable, quality child-care system that can support families (Doherty, et al., 1995).

For twenty years to April 1996, federal funds were transferred to the provinces and territories under the Canada Assistance Plan (CAP). In 1971, five years after CAP was implemented, the provision for cost-sharing child-care expenditures as welfare services was added. This cost-sharing mechanism guaranteed funds for child-care subsidies for low-income families. The federal government would reimburse up to 50 percent of eligible provincial or territorial expenditures that helped lessen, remove, or prevent the causes and effects of poverty for people deemed to be in financial need or vulnerable to becoming in need.

Reimbursement occurred through two routes with different intentions and different criteria for eligibility. The social assistance route was intended to alleviate poverty by helping families deemed 'in need' of social assistance. Under this mechanism the Government would purchase 'items of assistance' on behalf of eligible low-income families. Eligibility was established by the jurisdiction in which the families resided with subsidies being limited to non-profit services and to those determined eligible after a needs test was employed. Needs tests generally required the submission of personal information about income, rent, mortgage payments, debts, and savings. The employment of a needs test allowed cost-sharing of unregulated and commercial child-care.

Under the welfare services route federal funds were used to support social welfare services intended to prevent (not alleviate) poverty. The eligibility criteria for welfare service route funding was 'likelihood of need'; eligible families were those who would become 'in need' if child-care services were not provided. Eligibility was determined by an income test which is considered less intrusive than a needs test because it requires only the submission of information about personal income (Friendly, 1994). Funding for child-care under this mechanism included the provision of operating grants for regulated non-profit services, expenditures directly related to the subsidy-eligible children receiving the service, and refunds for the value of depreciation of land, premises, and equipment that could be directly attributed to the subsidised children. As such, cost-sharing under the welfare services route was restricted to regulated and non-profit child-care. Moreover, this mechanism, with its depreciation refunds amounting to very little, provided few, if any, incentives to the provinces and territories

to develop new child-care spaces (Doherty, et al., 1995:20).

The Canadian government provides a Child Care Expense Deduction (CCED) which allows one parent to claim a work-related child-care deduction from their personal income tax. In 1993 the maximums were raised to \$5000 for a child six years of age and under and \$3000 per school-aged child between 7 and 14 years of age. Maximum deductions had previously been raised in 1988 from \$2000 to \$4000 per year per child under seven and to \$2000 for children seven to fourteen. In addition, parents with children with special needs are able to deduct a maximum of \$8000 per child from their income tax (Goelman, 1992).

It has been argued, since its inception, that the maximum deduction comes nowhere near the real cost of child-care, the scheme does nothing to increase the supply, is of little use to parents who have to pay user fees up front, favours high-income over low-income earners, and fails to provide any subsidy to the majority of working parents who cannot produce receipts for expenses incurred (most informal caregivers are reluctant to issue tax receipts because they generally do not declare their income) (Ferguson, 1991; Heitlinger, 1993). A deduction, as previously mentioned, is most beneficial for families with higher incomes and is of no benefit to those without a taxable income. Further, it cannot be claimed by parents who care for their children at home, 'a matter of great concern to groups representing homemakers (such as REAL Women of Canada)' (Baker, 1995:203).

Federal child-care expenditure also includes child-care allowances for trainees in programs run by Employment and Immigration Canada and money spent by the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs for child-care assistance on some reserves in some provinces. As indicated in Table 7.4 (overleaf), total federal expenditure on child-care throughout the early 1990s has amounted to about \$1 billion per year.

Total government spending on child-care (federal plus provincial expenditure) increased two and a half fold from \$542.3 million in 1985 to \$1369.7 million in 1995. As Table 7.4 indicates, direct federal government expenditure in 1995 was almost five times that provided a decade earlier. The majority of this increase went to increases in subsidies and in the Child Care Expense Deduction. The federal contribution to provincial child-care expenditure, however, increased by only 52%, as shown in Table 7.5 (overleaf), and declined as a proportion of total child-care spending. Growth in the proportion of federal spending occurred in only five provinces between 1992 and 1995.

These increases were small and resulted mainly from reductions in the contributions made by provincial governments to child-care expenditure.

Table: 7.4: Federal Child-Care & Related Expenditure, Canada, 1984/85, 1993/94, 1995/96 and 1996/97.

FEDERAL EXPENDITURES	AMOUNT (\$ MILLION)			
	1984/85	1993/94	1995/96	1996/97
<i>Services</i>				
Canada Assistance Plan	90	300	300	-
Canada Health and Social Transfer	-	-	-	600
Aboriginal Child-care (INAC)	3	9	17	18
First Nations and Inuit Child-care	-	37	6	26
<i>Individual Transfers</i>				
Dependent Care Allowances		91	76	na
Child Care Expense Deduction	115	310	330	330
Supplement to the Child Care Tax Credit	-	340	-	-
<i>Total Direct Support</i>	<i>208</i>	<i>1087</i>	<i>729</i>	<i>974</i>

Source: Status of Women Canada (1986) Table 8.1:p167; CRRU (1994, 1997).

Table 7.5: Federal, Provincial And Territorial Child-Care Expenditures, Canada, 1984-85, 1991-92, 1994-95.

PROVINCE / TERRITORY	FEDERAL GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURE (\$ MILLIONS) ^A			PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURE (\$ MILLIONS)			FEDERAL \$ AS A PROPORTION OF TOTAL EXPENDITURE (%)		
	1985	1992	1995	1985	1992	1995	1985	1992	1995
Alberta	17.5	11.1	15.5	47.9	66.6	67.6	26.8	14.3	18.6
British Columbia	21.8	24.3	49.3	23.3	79.7	140.8	48.3	23.4	25.9
Manitoba	10.8	15.3	17.4	14.6	42.2	45.2	42.5	26.6	27.8
New Brunswick	5.5	1.0	0.9	4.2	3.6	3.2	56.7	21.7	22.0
Newfoundland & Labrador	3.7	1.0	1.3	2.4	1.7	2.9	60.7	37.0	31.0
Northwest Territories	0.6	-	-	0.2	2.3	1.7	75.0	-	-
Nova Scotia	7.6	5.2	5.9	5.6	11.4	14.9	57.6	31.3	28.4
Ontario	88.3	188.4	169.9	100.0	420.1	541.8	46.9	31.0	23.9
Prince Edward Island	1.0	0.9	0.7	0.6	2.8	1.7	62.5	24.3	29.2
Quebec	49.4	46.0	61.3	118.8	140.7	203.7	29.4	24.6	23.1
Saskatchewan	9.7	6.3	5.9	8.4	12.3	12.7	53.6	33.9	31.7
Yukon	0.2	1.1	1.3	0.2	2.4	4.1	50.0	31.4	24.1
<i>Sum</i>	<i>216.1</i>	<i>300.6</i>	<i>329.4</i>	<i>326.2</i>	<i>785.8</i>	<i>1040.3</i>	<i>39.8</i>	<i>27.7</i>	<i>24.0</i>
<i>Average</i>	<i>18.01</i>	<i>27.33</i>	<i>29.95</i>	<i>27.18</i>	<i>65.48</i>	<i>86.69</i>	<i>39.9</i>	<i>30.2</i>	<i>26.2</i>

^a Federal Expenditures are estimates of entitlements. Figures for Ontario, British Columbia and Alberta for 1991/92 would have been considerably less given the ceiling of 5% imposed on expenditure growth for these three provinces by the federal government's March 1990 budget.

Sources: Status of Women Canada (1986) Table 8.6:p192; CNCCS (1994, 1997) Child Care in Canada: Provinces and Territories 1993/1995.

Changes in expenditure, however, vary from province to province. This disparity arises, for the most part, from different political orientations to child-care. As the case study of Ontario in Chapter V clearly demonstrated, the political ideology of the governing party greatly influences the way in which provincial governments respond to the child-care needs of the province. This is reflected in the data presented in Table

7.6. For example, provincial expenditure per child in Ontario in 1991/92 and 1994/95, when the New Democratic Party (NDP) was in power, was more than double that in 1984/85 during the last year of a Conservative government. With the Conservative Party back in office, child-care expenditure has been subject to severe funding cuts. Similar trends are evident in other provinces. That is, increases in expenditure per child are witnessed during the years of liberal minded governments that perceive child-care as a public responsibility, at least partially, and/or as an economic benefit to the province. On the other hand, reductions appear to coincide with conservative governments orientated to limited state involvement in the workings of the family and the market place and of the view that child-care is a private rather than a public concern.

Table 7.6: Provincial Expenditure Per Child, Canada, 1984-85, 1991-92 & 1994-95.

PROVINCE / TERRITORY	EXPENDITURE PER CHILD (\$)		
	1984/85	1991/92	1994/95
Alberta	134.00	126.03	27.52
British Columbia	88.00	137.74	226.00
Manitoba	124.00	201.65	228.03
New Brunswick	67.00	28.17	25.39
Newfoundland & Labrador	45.00	15.40	30.41
Northwest Territories	57.00	135.75	81.74
Nova Scotia	80.00	70.76	95.22
Ontario	118.00	231.76	281.81
Prince Edward Island	60.00	109.03	67.01
Quebec	142.00	121.57	170.84
Saskatchewan	86.00	59.49	66.32
Yukon	85.00	399.70	518.56
<i>Average (without Yukon)</i>	<i>91.00</i>	<i>112.49</i>	<i>118.21</i>
<i>Average</i>	<i>90.50</i>	<i>136.42</i>	<i>151.57</i>

Sources: Status of Women Canada (1986) Table 8.6:p192; CNCCS (1994, 1997) Child Care in Canada: Provinces and Territories 1993/1995.

The variation between provinces is also evident in the eligibility levels for child-care fee relief. Eligibility levels for partial and full subsidies in all provinces and territories in Canada are considerably lower than eligibility levels for Childcare Assistance in Australia. As the figures in Table 7.7 (below) indicate, eligibility for partial subsidies is most stringent in Newfoundland with an annual family income of \$18,240 for one parent families with one child and \$19,320 for two parent families with two children. Income eligibility levels are least restrictive in Quebec for single parent families with one child and in the Yukon for couple families with two children at income cut-off levels of \$35,800 and \$47,772 per annum respectively. Eligibility levels for full subsidies are also lowest in Newfoundland and highest for two parents families with two children in the Yukon. The cut-off for a full subsidy for single parent families with one child is

highest in Saskatchewan at \$19,668. These provincial disparities in eligibility rules highlight further the inequities that exist in direct government financial support for child-care across Canada.

Table 7.7: Income Eligibility Levels for Child-Care Fee Subsidies, Canada, 1995.

PROVINCE / TERRITORY	PARTIAL SUBSIDY CUT-OFF		FULL SUBSIDY CUT-OFF	
	1 parent, 1 child	2 parents, 2 children	1 parent, 1 child	2 parents, 2 children
Newfoundland & Labrador	18,240	19,320	9,960	11,040
Prince Edward Island	22,200	39,168	10,080	14,880
Nova Scotia	24,540*	34,092*	16,812*	17,712*
New Brunswick	23,100*	24,180*	15,000	15,000
Quebec	35,800*	40,300*	12,000	16,800*
Ontario ^a	26,993 - 15,998*			
Manitoba	24,369	40,059	13,787	18,895
Saskatchewan ^b	31,920*	45,720*	19,668	20,868
Alberta	25,765	37,970	18,710	22,780
British Columbia	27,816*	31,846*	18,984*	23,016*
Northwest Territories ^c	30,516	32,382	11,922	13,794
Yukon	28,572	47,772	17,772	26,172
Canadian Average	26,621	35,710	13,246	18,269

* A change in the eligible income level occurred between 1993 and 1995.

^a There are no data on province-wide income levels for Ontario subsidy eligibility. Levels given are average incomes of families receiving subsidy in Metropolitan Toronto.

^b Income levels for subsidy eligibility in Saskatchewan are gross income.

^c Eligibility in the Northwest Territories varies with client's actual housing, utility and child-care costs, plus social assistance rates of food and clothing. A needs assessment test is applied so there is no set point at which subsidy ceases to be available. There is no territory-wide maximum subsidy. Maximum subsidies are set for the type of care. There is no minimum user fee. Figures given are averages based on the ranges provided for 1993.

Source: CRRU (1994, 1997) Table 10.

As the data in Chapter VI on availability, affordability and variations in use attest, the present funding situation of child-care in Canada results in different systems and numerous inequities within and between the provinces. Indirect government funding for child-care in the form of assistance to families is somewhat more generous, though not without inequities and concerns over overlapping jurisdiction.

Direct Government Funding for Child-Care in Canada: A Summary

Unlike its Australian counterpart, the Canadian federal government does not directly fund child-care subsidies in Canada. Instead, it provides block funds to the provinces and territories for them to distribute. The provinces and territories set the eligibility levels for subsidies and some provinces and territories provide supplements. Consequently, the level of child-care subsidies varies from province to province.

The federal government does, however, provide a Child Care Expense Deduction which is delivered through the taxation system. This work-related benefit, claimable by

those who can produce receipts for child-care expenses incurred, favours high income over low income earners. In addition, federal child-care expenditure includes child-care allowances for trainees in approved government employment and immigration program and assistance for some Aboriginal and Inuit child-care programs. As in Australia, child-care assistance is tied, for the most part, to participation, and preparation for participation, in the labour market. As such, federal child-care expenditure in Canada also encourages the commodification of women's labour, albeit only for some women.

Indirect Government Funding for Child-Care in Canada

Up until December 1992, the Canadian Federal Government offered several different tax deductions and credits to families with children in addition to the Family Allowance. In the Income Tax Act of 1918, several tax exemptions implicitly acknowledged the social value of marriage and child-rearing and the government's obligation to support these activities (Baker, 1995:134). A deduction for employees with dependent wives, based merely on financial dependency, and a child tax deduction for taxpayers with children under sixteen, were built into the tax system. The Married Credit and the Equivalent to Married Credit, a deduction for common-law partners, were deductions designed to equalize the benefits of one-parent and two-parent families. Both deductions were converted to credits in 1988.

After years of sporadic increases with the cost of living the child tax deduction was also converted to the non-refundable Credit for Dependent Children in 1988. A refundable Child Tax Credit of \$585 per child under the age of nineteen in 1991, initiated in 1978, was already in existence to assist lower- and middle-income families with the costs of child-rearing. This credit was based on net family income of \$23,500 or less and was supplemented to the value of \$207 for families with children under seven years of age if no child-care expenses were claimed on their income tax. An exception was made if both parents were in the labour force. The 1988 reform distributed benefits in a more progressive manner, though most families suffered a substantial loss in benefits and the poorest families were no better off (Battle, 1988). Moreover, the credit for a dependent spouse remained about fourteen times more than the credit for a dependent child (Baker, 1995:139).

The Family Allowance, introduced in 1944, was originally a universal benefit. In 1973, the Family Allowance Act was amended to index the benefit level to the consumer

price index and make it amenable to taxation so part of it could be taxed back from higher income families. The Act also permitted provinces to vary the amount of benefit. For example, Alberta varied the amount by the age of the child, while Quebec provided a provincial supplement and higher amounts for older children and for each subsequent child to a maximum of three (Government of Canada, 1994). In 1986 the Family Allowance was partially de-indexed and by 1989 the tax-back rate for families with net incomes of over \$50,000 reached 100 percent (National Council of Welfare, 1992). Consequently, a significant portion of federal outlay on the Family Allowance was recovered in federal and provincial taxes (Baker, 1995).

In January 1993 the Family Allowance program, the Child Tax Credit and non-refundable Credit for Dependent Children was replaced by a Child Tax Benefit targeted to families with middle or lower incomes (National Council of Welfare, 1994; Government of Canada, 1994). The Child Tax Benefit is a partially indexed benefit which provides tax-free monthly payments to help families with the cost of raising children under 18 years of age. The amount of benefit is calculated on the number and age of children in the family, and on the previous years family net income, family working income and deduction for child care expenses (Government of Canada, 1994: Cat T4114(E) Rev.94) For instance, in 1994 the Child Tax Benefit consisted of a basic benefit of \$1,020 for each child under age eighteen plus a supplement of \$75 for the third child and each additional child, a supplement of \$213 for each child under the age of seven, and a working income supplement of up to \$500 a year for low-income working families with a family net income of less than \$25,921 in 1993. A benefit reduction of 2.5 percent was subtracted for one-child families and 5 percent for two-parent families if the family net income in 1993 was more than \$25,921.

Variations to the basic benefit occurred in three provinces. In Alberta the benefit varied according to the age of the child¹⁴. In Quebec, the benefit varied with each additional child¹⁵ and an extra \$103 was provided for every child aged twelve to seventeen. In Saskatchewan the value of the family allowance component of the Child Tax Benefit is deducted from its welfare payments whereas in all other provinces the benefit is tax exempt (National Council of Welfare, 1994).

¹⁴ The basic benefit in Alberta in 1994 was \$935 for children under 7; \$1004 for children 7 to 11; \$1,133 for children 12 to 15; and \$1,205 for children 16 to 17.

¹⁵ In Quebec the basic benefit in 1994 was \$869 for the first child; \$1000 for the second child; and \$1,597 for the third and each additional child.

Table: 7.8: Taxation Benefits and Concessions for Families, Canada, 1984/85, 1993/94 and 1996/97.

TAXATION BENEFITS AND CONCESSIONS FOR FAMILIES	AMOUNT (\$ MILLION)		
	1984/85	1993/94	1996/97
Family Allowances	1910	-	-
Child Tax Exemption	860	-	-
Child Tax Credit	1325	-	600
Child Tax Benefit	-	5100	5350
Aboriginal Head Start	-	10	23
Other Child-care Initiatives	-	120	6
<i>Total Taxation Benefits and Concessions</i>	<i>4095</i>	<i>5230</i>	<i>5979</i>

Sources: Office of the Status of Women, Canada (1986); CRRU (1997).

In its 1997 budget the Liberal Government introduced the income-tested Canada Child Tax Benefit. This \$6 billion benefit, to be introduced in 1998, shares many similarities with the Howard Government's Family Tax Package introduced in Australia in 1996. It combines the existing \$5.1 billion Child Tax Benefit and working income supplement with \$250 million committed in the 1996 budget and \$600 million announced in the 1997 budget. The working income supplement is to be enriched and restructured to convert it from a 'per family' to a 'per child' benefit. These and earlier changes are illustrated in Table 7.8 in which total taxation benefits and concessions for families in Canada are shown to be far from insignificant. In 1984/85 federal expenditure on assistance for families was \$4095 million. By 1993/94 the outlay was \$5230 million, and between 1993/94 and 1996/97 expenditure rose by another \$749 million. While the Child Tax Benefit effectively simplified the package of benefits provided by the federal government to families with dependent children to assist them with the cost of rearing their children, the taxation system, a relatively efficient and effective means of delivering the benefit, is regressive and unlikely to improve the level of benefits in the future (Baker, 1995:155).

Indirect Government Funding for Child-Care in Canada: A Summary

Until recently, federal government assistance to help families in Canada raise their children included a family allowance, a child tax credit and a non-refundable tax credit for dependent children. Like that in Australia, the main provision was the universal family allowance. This allowance was replaced, along with the tax credits, with a targeted child tax benefit. In 1997, an income-tested child tax benefit, similar to the Family Tax Package in Australia, was introduced. These changes in benefits and in eligibility rules reflect a shift, away from universal payments to targeted taxation

concessions, similar to that seen in Australia.

Summary

Successive governments in Australia and Canada have assumed that if they provide tax deductions or rebates the private market will provide adequate and accessible child-care for parents to purchase. This demand-side subsidy which is supposed to give parents choice tends to be more illusory than real, since the basic principles of demand and supply do not apply to children's services (Heitlinger, 1993; Moss, 1994; Cox, 1996). Feminists generally favour a supply-side subsidy guaranteeing public child-care services for all parents who want them - financed like education and child health services out of the general tax revenue - because charging child-care user fees puts working parents at a financial disadvantage compared to workers without children. Child-care costs are arguably a disincentive for women to participate in the workforce (Moss, 1994). Moreover, it has been found that 'a substantial proportion of parents and Canadians have seriously questioned the involvement of the profit sector in child care' (Ferguson, 1991:96).

Throughout the late 1980s and the early 1990s, governments in Australia and Canada, as elsewhere in the Western democratic world¹⁶, attempted to target assistance to families. In 1987, Family Allowance in Australia changed from being a universal to a targeted benefit. It has since been subject to more stringent targeting. In Canada, the government chose to deliver the benefit, universal up until 1993, through the tax system. As Baker (1995) has demonstrated, the targeting of family assistance in Australia actually improved the total package for low-income families, whereas in Canada middle- and upper-income families are either worse off and low-income families no better off than they were before the reform. The shift to delivery via the taxation system placed the family allowance firmly in federal jurisdiction (Baker, 1995) and made it easier for the federal government to replace it, plus several tax credits, with the Child Tax Benefit. In Canada, the federal government is constantly in dispute over the distribution of powers and responsibilities with the provinces and territories, unlike Australia, where the Commonwealth government has jurisdiction over personal income tax and over all income security benefits. While tax concessions for child-care

¹⁶ Baker's analysis of child allowances and family tax concessions demonstrated that Germany, Sweden and the United Kingdom, as well as Canada and Australia, have attempted to target or successfully targeted family benefits during the past decade.

and the costs of child-rearing are promoted by conservative governments as the most efficient and effective means of benefit delivery, it is regressive and does little for those with no taxable income.

CHAPTER VIII

TOWARD A NATIONAL CHILD-CARE SYSTEM: QUALITY ASSURANCE, REGULATION AND PLANNING FRAMEWORKS.

Introduction

Policies and political rhetoric in Australia and Canada concerning the future of child-care provision, discussed in Chapters IV and V, emphasise equity, quality, flexibility and sustainable growth. These characteristics have been promoted as national goals with federal dollars supporting government commitments. However, it is argued here that more is needed than mere dollars for these goals to be realised. Indeed, federal legislation is required for the development of a national child-care system that is co-ordinated, planned and regulated at a national level, and that encompasses all forms of child-care services and government support for all types of child-care arrangements used by families with young children.

All levels of government in Australia and Canada are involved, to some extent, in the planning of child-care services, in the regulation of quality and access to these services, and in the subsidisation of child-care places. A comprehensive and unified approach to the support of various child-care arrangements is, however, lacking in both countries.

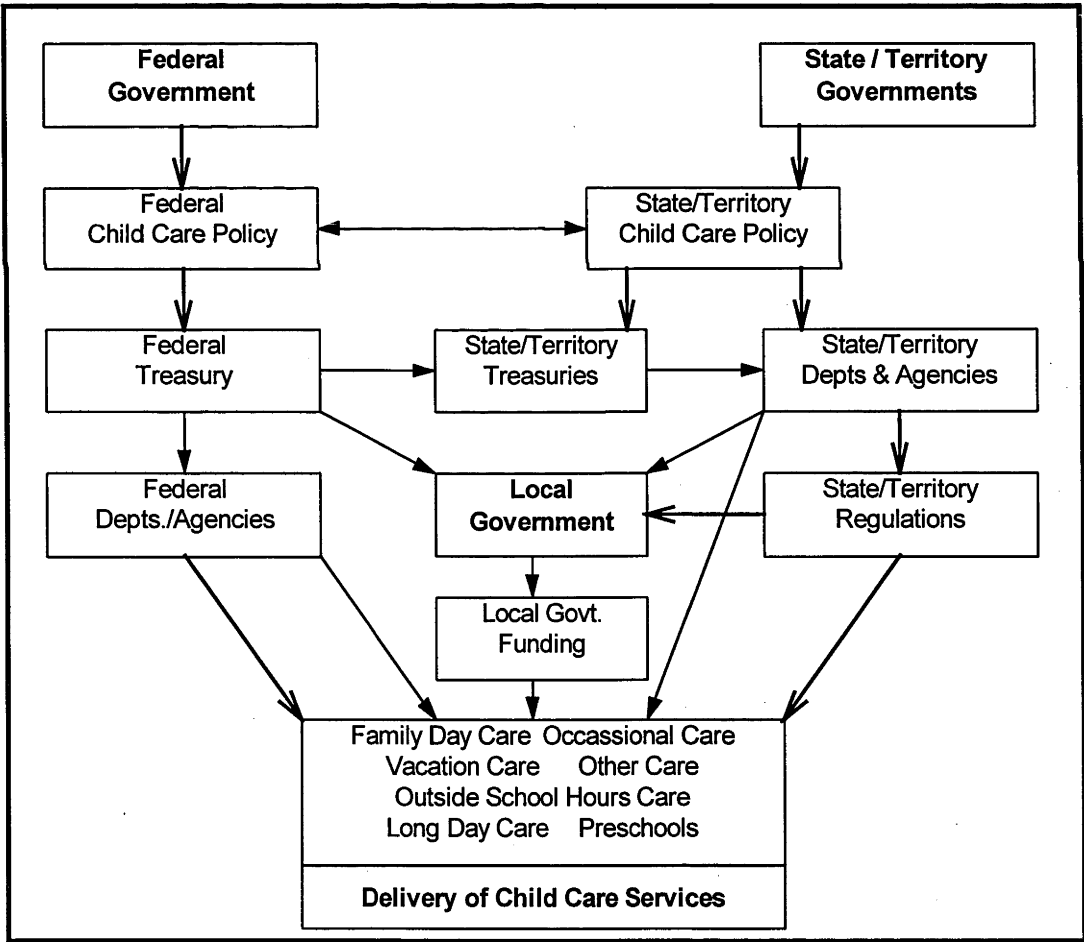
In Australia, a national strategy for the expansion of community-based child-care places is determined by the Commonwealth government on a cost-sharing basis with the State and Territory governments. Local governments contribute by supplying information on local needs and through zoning requirements. Planning is limited to the community-based sector (EPAC, 1996). Moreover, policy developed largely within the context of Commonwealth and State and Territory budgets has resulted in a diverse range of services, a variety of funding arrangements and a range of administrative and regulatory controls, together which make up the complex Australian child-care system depicted in Figure 8.1 (overleaf).

This diversity in the current Australian system has evolved over time in response to submissions, lobbying by various interest groups and policies that have followed a

supply and demand approach¹. Theoretically, diversity offers consumers choice. In reality, it equates with a lack of integration between child-care arrangement types, services that may be poorly located, have unsuitable hours of operation, or be of a form other than that preferred by parents. Moreover, as Wangmann has observed:

Current funding arrangements and regulations for specific service types act against flexibility and integration, and prevent or provide no incentive for them to adapt to the changing needs of families. ... The rigidity of existing child care services is largely due to these arrangements and the involvement of different tiers of government in different forms of child care provision. Likewise, the lack of an integrated approach to planning has created problems of overlap or duplication in some areas, and gaps in others. This has resulted in high administrative costs and gross inequalities within the system in levels of received funding, user costs, availability and quality. (1995:52)

Figure 8.1: Current Australian Government Roles and Funding Relationships in Child-Care.

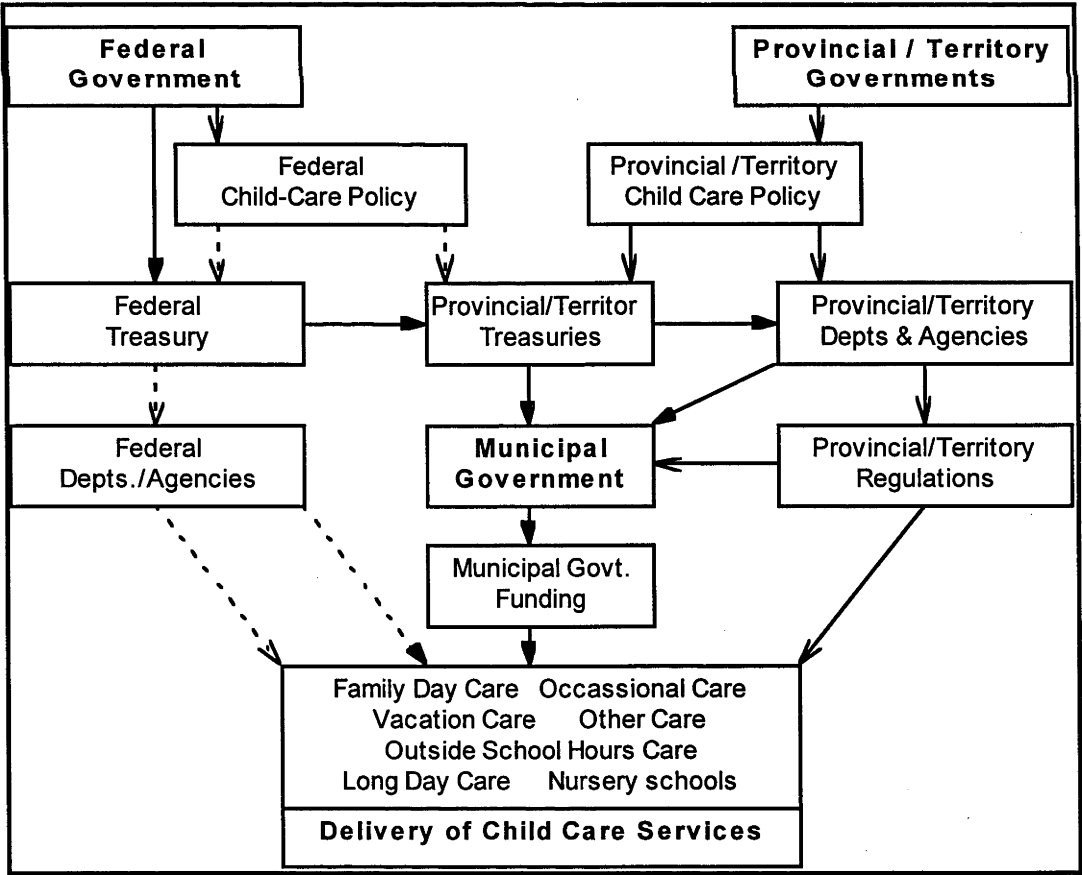


Source: Figure 15, Wangmann (1995:52).

¹ See Hayden (1992, 1993) for an account of what she refers to as the 'hidden' interests that have influenced child-care policy in Australia and in Canada.

As in Australia, the federal government in Canada has had an important role in initiating and maintaining national health and welfare and other social programs through the application of its spending powers. Up until the introduction of the Canada Health and Social Transfer in 1996, the federal government influenced the shape of child-care in Canada by helping selected families meet their child-care costs through provisions made under the Canada Assistance Plan (discussed in previous chapters) and via the administration of the Child Care Expense Deduction under the Income Tax Act (Friendly, 1994). The role of government in policy and in funding of child-care in Canada is somewhat similar to that depicted in Figure 8.1 for Australia. As illustrated in Figure 8.2, the role of the Canadian federal government is, for the most part, restricted to providing funds to the provinces. The provincial governments are primarily responsible for the formation of child-care policy. Canadian municipal governments also play a greater role in child-care policy than do their Australian counterparts.

Figure 8.2: Current Canadian Government Roles and Funding Relationships in Child-Care.



Based on Wangmann's (1995:52) model of Current Australian Government Roles and Funding Relationships and revised to reflect the Canadian situation.

The existing assemblage of child-care services in Australia and Canada are examined in this chapter in light of an ideal comprehensive national child-care system promoted by Australian and Canadian child-care activists. The characteristics of this ideal model maximise public responsibility for child-care. In the past, Australia and Canada have been regarded as having child-care systems that more nearly resemble the maximum private responsibility model of child-care. As discussed in previous chapters, efforts have been made by various Australian and Canadian governments toward the creation of a national child-care system. The successes and failures of these initiatives are highlighted in the following comparison with the characteristics of a comprehensive national child-care system².

Characteristics of a Comprehensive National Child-Care System

The ideal of a comprehensive national child-care system is of a system that is not only coordinated but is also flexible and equitable. It is based on the assumption that the care of children is a social responsibility that should be shared by parents and the society as a whole through the workings of the state. It incorporates a variety of service delivery models which provide high quality, inclusive, flexible, appropriate, responsive, and coordinated child-care. That is, a comprehensive national child-care system is characteristic of legislation that encompasses national planning, coordination, and regulation of publicly funded, flexible, appropriate, affordable, accessible, quality child-care and support services, as listed in Figure 8.3 (overleaf). Integration of services is considered essential for the efficient and effective utilisation of existing infrastructure, funds and staff, and is key to the provision of greater flexibility for families. Although this ideal system is unlikely to be achieved it can be made a reality given

a federal policy framework, substantial funding, a set of principles that draw support from child development and other research, complementary family policy, provincially determined child care delivery systems, and local involvement in planning and controlling services. (Friendly, 1994:266)

A comprehensive national policy framework is deemed essential if there is to be a variety of child-care options for parents with young children and the delivery of child-care across a nation is to be efficient and equitable. The framework would delineate the involvement of different levels of government and provide policy and infrastructure

² See Haskins (1992), Kamerman & Kahn (1994) and Garfinkel, Hochschild & McLanahan (1996) for details on child-care policy in other industrialised democratic countries.

that could support the provision of child-care services that can appropriately meet the diverse needs of different children, families and communities.

Figure 8.3: Components of an Ideal Comprehensive National Child-Care System

COMPONENT	DESCRIPTION
Comprehensive Service Delivery	Provision of a range of child-care / early childhood education options including: full- and part-time group child-care; Family Day Care; Outside School Hours Care; Occasional Care for stay-at-home parents; Emergency Care; seasonal child-care; support services for parents and other caregivers such as Multifunctional Family Resource Centres which provide training, health care, parenting information and education, toy library, parent-child drop-in, + /- long day care, and play groups; nursery school or pre-school programs.
Complementary Policies	Maternity Leave, Parental Leave, Paternity Leave, Paid Family Responsibility Leave, Flexible Workplace Arrangements
Universal Availability & Inclusiveness	Sufficient supply of affordable child-care services for equitable accessible to all children 0-12 years and their families regardless of residential area, family income and status, ethnic and linguistic group, culture, child's ability level or type of disability, and parent's employment status. Inclusive programs need to be well resourced to provide adequate environments and supports. Universal availability is a non-targeted, non-compulsory approach.
Coordination	A comprehensive child-care system would be well coordinated to provide maximum benefit from public funds and to streamline access to services for families. Services should be supportive of continuity for the child through the maintenance of linkages among child-care services and between child-care services and recreational and school services. Coordination therefore requires formal planning mechanisms at the community level as well as at all levels of government.
Flexibility	Different families and children have different needs. If child-care is arranged in a flexible manner in a community, it is much more possible to meet these diverse needs (which may change over time or vary within a time period). Shiftworkers need reliable child-care that can accommodate their changing work rosters. At the same time the children need stability, consistency, and educational and social opportunities.
High Quality	Child-care services need to reflect the best available research knowledge about adult behaviours and program characteristics that are consistent with child well-being and optimal development. High quality child-care requires regulatory standards related to staff training, the number of children per caregiver, and group size that have been found desirable through research. To maintain quality, there must be ongoing monitoring for compliance of regulations and sanctions for non-compliance, on-going staff training, support for family day care providers and on-going research into factors that affect children, families, and child-care providers.
Funding	Primarily public with minimal contribution by parents in the form of fees
Responsive-ness & Appropriateness	Programs that are responsive to community needs have sufficient spaces; allow for a range of enrolment options within and between programs so that care is available at the times, and on the days, that it is required; address the requirements of children with special needs, and support cultural and linguistic diversity. The implementation of responsive services demands a legislated framework of standards and regulation, adequate funding and mechanisms for parent and community input into service planning
Accountability	Services must be responsible and held responsible to the children, parents and community serves and to the taxpayers. To implement accountability there must be mechanisms for ongoing and substantive parent and community input into policy and program decisions, governance by a community board or local council and monitoring to ensure quality and that services are meeting user and community needs.
Location	Child's home, Carer's home - relative, friend, family day care etc), workplace, Child-care Centre, School, Church Annex, Neighbourhood Centre, Pre-school / Nursery School, Recreation Facility
Auspice / Provider	Services could be provided by a variety of auspices including: regulated family day care, commercial child-care centres, government child-care centres, non-government non-profit child-care centres (i.e., church, NGO), unregulated family day care, nanny, au pair, relative, friend, neighbour

Source: Friendly (1994:); Doherty et al (1995:79-80).

The development and implementation of such a framework would require substantial funding. Ideally this funding would be contingent upon compliance with national standards and would recognise the respective cost-sharing abilities of the different levels of government. Minimal parental fees would be required. The framework would be based on a set of principles that draw support from child development and other research. These principles, along with clearly articulated objectives, would provide a basis upon which policies and services could be designed as well as providing a reference point against which the implementation of policies and services could be measured. Core principles would include universal accessibility, comprehensiveness, high quality, flexibility, responsiveness, and accountability³. The principle of universal accessibility would promote inclusive programs that are of sufficient supply and are affordable for all children 0-12 years and their families regardless of residential area, family income and status, ethnic and linguistic group, culture, child's ability level or type of disability, and parent's employment status. Such programs would be non-compulsory, would be non-targeted, and would need to be well resourced so they can provide adequate child-care environments and supports (Doherty et al, 1995).

In accordance with the principle of comprehensiveness, the framework would encompass an array of auspices providing a range of child-care / early childhood education options regardless of where the child is being cared for. For example the child may be cared for in his or her own home, in the carer's home, at the workplace, in a child-care centre, at school, in a church annex, at a neighbourhood centre, pre-school / nursery school, or recreation facility. Indeed, comprehensiveness refers to a continuum of services for children aged 0-12 years that meet the educational, developmental, and social needs of all children while supporting parents and other caregivers who are at home with young children and parents who are working or studying (Beach, 1992 cited in Friendly, 1994).

The framework would promote regulated family day care, commercial child-care centres, government child-care centres, and non-government non-profit child-care centres (i.e., church, NGO), but also provide support services for parents caring for their own children or utilising the services of informal child-care providers, nannies, and au paires. Child-care options would include: full- and part-time group child-care; family

³ The principles described here are those discussed by Doherty et al (1995). They reflect articles 18, 19, 24, and 29 of the United Nations' *Convention on the Rights of the Child*, to which Canada and Australia are signatories.

day care; outside school hours care; occasional care for stay-at-home parents; emergency care; seasonal child-care; nursery school or pre-school programs; and support services for parents and other caregivers such as training, health care, information and education, toy library, parent-child drop-in centres, play groups, and mobile multifunction facilities. These options would be of the highest possible quality. That is, they would reflect the best available research knowledge about child-care that is consistent with child well-being and optimal development (Doherty et al, 1995).

Different families and children have different needs, which may change over time or vary within a time period (Friendly, 1994). The provision of child-care therefore needs to be flexible to meet this diversity. Employment of parents with young children is not restricted to the hours of 9am to 5pm. Indeed, many parents are shiftworkers who work irregular days or hours and must juggle their work schedules so that they can care for their children. Others are employed in seasonal work. While the child-care needs of these families vary from day to day, week to week, or month to month, their children need stability, consistency, and educational and social opportunities. That is, services must be responsive to community and family needs. They must allow for a range of enrolment options within and between various programs so that care is available at the times, and on the days, that it is required. Responsive services would also address the requirements of children with special needs, and support cultural and linguistic diversity. Moreover, services must be responsible and held responsible to the children, parents and community, and to the taxpayers.

Complementary public policy that allows families to balance work and family responsibilities is integral to the functioning of a comprehensive national child-care system. Complementary policies should include job protection and financial benefits such as paid maternity leave following childbirth, paid parental leave to care for very young children, paid adoption leave which reflects the realities of adopting an infant or an older child who needs attention and care, and paid family leave to carry out family responsibilities like the care of children when they are sick (Friendly, 1994:211).

The development, implementation and maintenance of comprehensive, high quality, universally accessible, responsive, flexible and accountable child-care services necessitates a legislated framework of standards and regulation, governance and monitoring, and adequate funding and mechanisms for ongoing and substantive parent and community input into policy and program decisions and service planning. In

particular, high quality services require regulatory standards, the monitoring of compliance with the regulations, sanctions for non-compliance, and ongoing staff training, support services and research into factors that affect children, families, and child-care providers. Indeed, Doherty et al (1995) suggest that child-care services should ideally be operated on a not-for-profit basis, since non-profit child-care services are more likely to be of high quality than for-profit services. In any case, local government, community and parental involvement in the planning and controlling of services is considered fundamental to a comprehensive national child-care system that ensures high quality and meets the needs of children, their mothers and fathers, employers, the local community, and society as a whole.

The ideal of a comprehensive national child-care system provides a benchmark against which existing child-care systems can be measured and compared. It is utilised in the ensuing section to examine child-care in Australia and Canada, to determine how nearly these systems approximate the ideal. In so doing, the requirements for the development, implementation and maintenance of a comprehensive national child-care system are examined. That is, the adequacy of existing standards and regulations and mechanisms for community input into policy and program decisions and service planning is gauged.

Comprehensive Service Delivery

In Australia, as in Canada, various Acts and Regulations at the state or provincial level guide licensing and regulation procedures in child-care centres, family day care and other children's services. Although Australia has a *Child Care Act* which governs the Children's Services Program, it only covers Commonwealth funded long day care centres. Other forms of formal child-care funded under the Children's Services Program are managed by bylaws and guidelines (Law Reform Commission, 1994). In 1993, funding under the Children's Services Program for long day care centres became tied to registration with the National Childcare Accreditation Council. The Children's Service's Program does not, however, constitute a planning framework, nor is it involved in the regulation of quality and access of child-care services. Licensing standards and regulations and preschool services fall under the auspice of the states and territories. Further, it is the Department of Social Security which is responsible for determining eligibility for child-care related income support such as Parenting Allowance, Childcare Cash Rebate, and Childcare Assistance, and providing the

payments for these benefits which assist families with the costs of parental and informal child-care arrangements. While many of the components of a comprehensive system are already in place in Australia, in isolation they do not constitute such a system.

It has been argued that Canada does not have a child-care system per se. Nonetheless, many of the pieces from which a comprehensive national child-care system could be built are, as in Australia, already available, though limited and in short supply (see Friendly, 1994: 267). For instance, early childhood training programs are provided by most community colleges, some universities and other training facilities in all provinces and territories, ongoing inservice training and professional development is on offer, and support services are provided by numerous organised groups throughout the country. In addition, various groups are assisted by concerned government officials when trying to access funding and to develop child-care programs that will meet the needs of particular communities.

Complementary Policies

Complementary policies acknowledge the particular problems workers face in balancing work with family responsibilities. Policies that complement child-care have a direct and/or indirect impact on child-care arrangements. Economic, employment and education policies exert their influence on child-care arrangements indirectly. Complementary policies that most directly effect care arrangements include maternity, paternity and parental leave policies, and family leave. Family-friendly policies are also work-related. For instance flexible working hours and flexible job design incorporating permanent part-time work, job sharing, working from home and flexitime arrangements are important components in the development of family-friendly policies.

The introduction of family-friendly conditions in workplaces not only benefits workers, but is likely to improve workplace productivity and efficiency. ... The benefits to employers of incorporating family-friendly conditions in enterprise agreements are not always apparent. (Jackson, 1994:2)

The majority of women who take a break from the labour force do so because they are pregnant or are caring for a child (DEET, 1994). For this reason, the availability of leave and benefits and of family-friendly work-place policies are important to encourage the return by women to the labour force after the birth of a child and to assist mothers (and fathers) to deal effectively with their family responsibilities when these intrude on 'work' time.

Maternity and Parental Leave and Benefits

Governments of most industrialised countries have developed maternity and/or parental leave and benefits in response to rising rates of female employment and declining birth rates when under pressure from unions, employee associations, and feminist groups (Dominelli, 1991; Heitlinger, 1993; Baker, 1995). Some countries are motivated to provide a less expensive alternative to high-cost infant and toddler care, to facilitate a better balance between work and family life, to support gender equity and/or to facilitate and support parents' choice between an at-home role or a labour force role (Kamerman & Kahn, 1991). The commitment to, degrees of comprehensiveness, and the funding level and mechanisms for these programs vary considerably from country to country, while the policies may be explicit, implicit, much discussed, or taken for granted. In Australia and in Canada, maternity and parental leaves and benefits also vary by jurisdiction, occupation and collective agreement (Glezer, 1988; Jackson, 1994; Heitlinger, 1993; Baker, 1995).

Maternity leave in Australia became available in 1973 with the passing of the Maternity Leave Act for Australian Government Employees. In 1979 after the Australian Council of Trade Unions won a test case before the Australian Conciliation and Arbitration Commission, women employees were granted the right to unpaid maternity leave under six federal awards. Up to 12 months maternity/adoption leave⁴ or 51 weeks of parental leave⁵ can be taken by most employees under federal or state awards. The Parental Leave Test Case also granted permanent part-time work to either parent if so agreed by the employer⁶. These provisions, which now constitute the 'parental leave standard' (McCreadie, 1994), covered 94 per cent of female wage earners in the state sector in 1988, although one in four women workers were ineligible for maternity leave either because they were casual workers or had been employed for an insufficient time with their employer (Glezer, 1988). The take-up rate in the private sector is further restricted by the lack of information and misinformation about leave provisions.

Leave is generally unpaid, although benefits vary by state depending largely on collective bargaining agreements between unions and employers. For example, Mission Energy under the Australian Services Union Agreement entitles female

⁴ Adoption leave was introduced in Australia for mothers in 1985.

⁵ Legislation for parental leave was passed in 1990 taking effect in 1991.

⁶ The permanent part-time option can be taken up in the two years after the birth or adoption of a child.

employees to 12 weeks maternity leave on full pay after 12 months of continuous service and one week's paternity leave on full pay for male employees (Jackson, 1994:36), while teachers in Catholic schools in NSW recently won six weeks paid maternity leave as part of an industry agreement (McCreadie, 1994:155). In the public sector, federal public service workers and Victorian civil servants are entitled to 12 weeks paid leave. In New South Wales civil servants are only entitled to six weeks paid leave. State variations also occur for parental leave provisions. For instance, men and women in the Australian Public Service have the right to 40 weeks of unpaid parental leave after 12 weeks of paid maternity leave (Heitlinger, 1993; Baker, 1994; McCreadie, 1994). Civil servants in New South Wales, South Australia and the Northern Territory have similar provisions ranging from one year in New South Wales and South Australia to six years in the Northern Territory.

In 1997, approximately 85 percent of new mothers were entitled to receive the Maternity Allowance. This allowance, introduced in 1995 by the (then) Labor Government, is a one-off means-tested payment of \$816 equivalent to six weeks of Parenting Allowance. It is payable to mothers on the birth of a new baby. Eligibility is the same as for the Basic Family Payment⁷. While the Maternity Allowance acknowledges that the majority of Australian women are not entitled to paid maternity leave, the Parenting Allowance recognises the value of caring work performed by parents (mostly mothers) who stay at home to care for their children (Government of Australia, 1995). Indeed, in 1996, 95 percent of recipients of the Parenting Allowance were women (ABS, 1997).

Table 8.1: Maternity and Parental Leave Arrangements, Australia and Canada, 1995.

COUNTRY	MATERNITY			PARENTAL		ADOPTION	
	Leave	Benefits	Eligibility ^a	Leave	Benefits	Leave	Benefits
Australia	52 wks	\$816	52 wks	51 wks	unpaid	51 wks	unpaid
Canada	17-18wks	57% salary	20 wks	0-34 wks	unpaid	0-18 wks	unapid

^aEligibility for a maternity benefit is based continuous employment with the same employer.
Sources: CRRU (1997);

The Canadian provisions are more generous than the Australian benefits shown in Table 8.1. Maternity and parental leaves are governed by employment standards legislation, federal or provincial, and benefits are governed by the Unemployment Insurance Act (O'Connor, 1993, 1994). This means that eligibility for unemployment

⁷ See Chapter VII.

insurance benefits does not guarantee eligibility for leave. Nonetheless, leave is generally paid for 17-18 weeks in most provinces, as shown in Table 8.1, after the employee has been working continuously for the same employer for at least 20 weeks in Quebec, 6 months for federal employers and 12 months in all other provinces and territories. The benefit replaces 57 percent of the employees income for 15 weeks, after a two week waiting period for the birth or adoption of a child, if the individual has worked and paid unemployment insurance premiums for a minimum of 20 weeks in the previous year or since her last unemployment insurance claim⁸. In 1991, 89 percent of all maternity leaves were compensated. Some collective agreements improve on national standards and some employers make and/or increase the payments and/or extend the length of leave. Supplementary leave and benefits are, however, typically provided only in the public sector and for high income jobs (O'Connor, 1994). Since 1990, Canada has also had a 10 week parental benefit paid at the same replacement rate as the maternity benefit. This also varies from province to province.

Maternity and parental provisions in Australia and in Canada have been described as 'less than adequate' (Friendly, 1994; Jackson, 1994). For the majority of working women in Australia there is no benefit which accompanies maternity leave while in Canada the benefit is insufficient for the less affluent and the duration of leave and benefits are considered to be too short. Stipulations about the length of employment prior to leave are more stringent in Australia than they are in Canada though both exclude the unemployed, self employed, students, casual and seasonal workers. In Canada, adoptive parents are not entitled to maternity leave and many workers who are entitled to maternity and parental leave do not take it up because they cannot afford to do so. Further, the provisions lack flexibility which would otherwise enable parents to meet their own particular family situation.

When compared with the provisions of other OECD countries⁹, maternity and parental leaves and benefits in Australia, and to a lesser degree in Canada, along with that in Great Britain and the United States¹⁰, stand out as inferior. In Australia paid maternity

⁸ The replacement rate is 60 percent if the recipient has a dependent and an income of \$390 per week or less (O'Connor, 1994:33).

⁹ See Kamerman & Kahn (1991, 1994) for a detailed account of the parental leave and child-care policies in Austria, Germany, France, Finland, Hungary, and in Sweden.

¹⁰ See Heitlinger (1993) for a discussion of maternity and parental leaves and benefits in Great Britain and Kahn & Kamerman (1994) for a comparison of provisions in the United States with those provided by Germany, Italy, France, the U.K., Denmark and Finland.

leave is generally dependent upon the generosity of the employer, while in Canada benefit entitlements are under the proviso of the federal unemployment insurance system. This is primarily a consequence of maternity and parental leave in Australia being developed under the terms of industrial awards rather than through legislation. As in Canada, maternity and parental leaves and benefits in Australia recognise childbearing as a social function and touch upon questions of equal opportunity measures for women workers, equal rights for men and adoptive parents, income replacement for mothers or fathers in the labour force, the optimal care of young children, and measures by employers to attract and retain skilled labour force.

Family-Friendly Workplace Policies

In a study on maternity leave in Australia, Glezer (1988) found that the majority of women who return to the labour force after the birth of a child do so for financial reasons, irrespective of their family income. These women were willing to combine workforce participation and childrearing, they stayed in the workforce until late in their pregnancy, had been with the same employer for a number of years, and were professional or para-professional managers with a high income earning capacity or women with husbands who had low incomes. The women who did not return to the labour force tended to have concerns about combining workforce participation and childrearing or could not find suitable child-care or work arrangements that would enable them to adequately combine their work and family responsibilities. Indeed, more than two thirds of working parents miss some work each year to care for their children: mothers are more likely than fathers to take time off work to care for their sick children (VandenHeavel, 1993, 1994). Employees who take time off for family responsibilities use paid leave, unpaid leave and flexible work arrangements¹¹.

As already discussed in Chapter V, both the Australian and Canadian governments are signatories to ILO Convention 156, Workers with Family Responsibilities. Australia ratified the convention in March 1990 but as yet Canada has not. On ratification of the convention the Australian federal government announced the establishment of the Work and Family Unit within the Department of Industrial Relations and the Office of the Status of Women launched a community education program in April 1992. ILO

¹¹ See Wolcott for a discussion on the structure of work and family responsibilities (1990a), on the views of small business on work and family (1993), and on how workers with family responsibilities are caught between tradition and transition (1990b).

Convention 156 forms part of the new Industrial Relations Act (McCreadie, 1994:153).

Family Responsibility Leave (Care for a Sick Child)

In a study for the Institute of Family Studies, VandenHeavel (1993) found that one in two mothers (52 percent) and about one in three fathers (31 percent) took some time off work to care for a sick child, 31 percent of parents took time off to care for children during school holidays, 27 percent to take their children to a medical or dental appointment and 26 percent to attend a child's school event. In February 1994 the ACTU launched a test case for paid family leave to allow employees to care for their dependent children or other members of the immediate family, seeking up to five days per year of paid leave for full- and part-time employees (McCreadie, 1994). The peak employer bodies opposed the claim arguing that it would be too costly. Similar arguments were put forth in earlier test cases for maternity and parental leave provisions (Heitlinger, 1993).

Flexible Work Arrangements

Flexible work arrangements are used by many parents as a solution to their child-care needs. The increase in the availability of part-time jobs in Australia and the up-take of these positions, particularly by women with young children, suggests a demand for flexible work arrangements by families with dependent children. The growth of part-time work in Canada has been less extensive (see Chapter 3). However, the growth in casual work in Australia, even more striking than the growth in part-time work (Probert, 1995), means that many workers are not entitled to benefits such as annual leave, sick leave and long service leave. The situation is similar in Canada, despite opposition from unions concerned about part-time work eroding full-time opportunities. Permanent part-time work (of which job sharing is a variant) does entitle workers to these benefits and has thus been promoted in Australia as an acceptable and legitimate demand for working parents (McCreadie, 1994). 'Not surprisingly, just as part-time and casual work is predominantly work done by women, so it is heavily concentrated in feminised industries and occupations' (Probert, 1995:1).

Unions have generally viewed enterprise bargaining as offering an opportunity to raise demands for more family friendly policies. Initiatives being introduced into enterprise bargaining, primarily in the public sector and in white collar jobs, have included: flexible working hours which allow workers to choose schedules which fit in with family needs;

relaxing part-time quotas so as to increase the availability of part-time work; the consideration of family and personal needs in determining work rosters; family leave and parental leave; eliminating differences in full- and part-time conditions; commitments not to casualise the work force; and the examination of Equal Employment Opportunity and family responsibilities (McCreadie, 1994:160-161). Concerns, however, have been raised about the impact of enterprise bargaining on women workers, particularly those who are in part-time or casual blue collar and service sector jobs (Probert, 1995; National Women's Consultative Council, 1993). Indeed, about half of the part-time workforce is to be found in the retail trade and in community services, industries which also employ the highest number of casual workers (Probert, 1995). Women in these positions and in these industries tend to have less bargaining power, are more likely to work in small workplaces, are less likely to be unionised and are thus more likely to be overlooked or to be disadvantaged in the bargaining process. The crux of these concerns is whether flexibility is aimed at helping workers with family responsibilities balance their work and family commitments or driven by employer concerns about capital utilisation, market demand and seasonal fluctuations (McCreadie, 1994). In the latter case, flexibility may mean casualisation and/or multitasking of the workforce with scheduling that creates more difficulties rather than less for families with young children and other dependents.

Education Policies

The importance of education policies for child-care in Australia is related to the provision of preschool services. In Canada, it is related to the various roles of school boards in the provision or support of child-care services. As already mentioned in the previous chapter, planning, funding and policy making for preschools in Australia is the responsibility of the states and territories. Nonetheless, it has been argued that the administration of all early childhood services should be transferred to the Department of Education, as occurred in New Zealand in 1986. This eliminated the distinction between care and education, officially gave recognition to early childhood education as a community responsibility and acknowledged research that has shown quality child-care with an educational component is beneficial to children in their first six years of life, informative years which are important in the social and cognitive development of children. As in Australia, the main role of school boards in Canada is the provision of early education or kindergarten programs which are not organised to provide full-day or part-day supplementary child-care for children of working parents. Some schools in

both countries do, however, provide outside school hours care or offer space and services to child-care providers for this purpose. South Australia and the Toronto Board of Education have been leaders in their respective countries with regard to the integration of care and education in child-care services¹².

Universal Availability, Inclusiveness and Flexibility of Child-Care

Non-parental child-care in Canada and Australia is neither universal nor inclusive. In Australia access is prioritised, giving first preference to families with work-related child-care needs. As Table 8.2 indicates, the percentage of children 0-12 years of age with mothers participating in the labour force has been and continues to be greater in Canada than it is in Australia, although the proportion of children for whom there is a regulated child-care space in Australia is now more than twice that in Canada.

Table 8.2: Number of Regulated Child-Care Spaces and Proportion of all Children Under 12 Years Using Regulated Care, Australia and Canada, Selected Years.

YEAR	NUMBER OF CHILDREN		PERCENTAGE OF CHILDREN WITH MOTHERS PARTICIPATING IN THE LABOUR FORCE ^A		NUMBER OF REGULATED CHILD-CARE SPACES		PERCENTAGE OF ALL CHILDREN IN REGULATED CHILD-CARE	
	<i>Australia</i>	<i>Canada</i>	<i>Australia</i>	<i>Canada</i>	<i>Australia</i>	<i>Canada</i>	<i>Australia</i>	<i>Canada</i>
1984/5	2,887,900	4,658,500	44.0 - 53.1	57.7	108,800	171,654	15.8	8.8
1992/3	3,085,900	4,939,115	na - 60.6	57.8	195,700	371,573	19.3	7.5
1995/6	3,102,800	5,063,694	56.2 - 62.5	64.2	277,200	425,332	20.1	8.4

^aFigures for Australia are given for all families and couple families only for children 0-14 years of age. Sources: AIHW (1997) Table 4.3.; SWC (1985); CRRU (1993, 1997).

Formal child-care services in Australia are under-represented by children with disabilities, by children from non-English speaking backgrounds, and by indigenous children (AIHW, 1997). For instance, in 1993 children with a disability in Australia constituted 4.4 percent of children aged 0-4 years and 8.3 percent of children aged 5-14 years yet only 2.2 percent of children using Children's Services Programs had a disability. According to the 1994 Children's Services Program Census, while 22 percent of all children under 12 years come from non-English speaking background families, 12 percent of children attending long day care, 11 percent of children in outside school hours care and only 6 percent of children in family day care had this

¹² The initiatives of the South Australian Government and Toronto Board of Education provided fodder for the policy shift in the provision of early education services in New Zealand (Smith & Swain, 1988).

background (Commonwealth Government, 1994). As shown in Chapter VII, a different definition of non-English speaking background families was used in the 1996 ABS Child Care Survey which also found children from this background to be under-represented in Commonwealth funded children's services.

The Commonwealth funds multifunctional indigenous children's services yet Aboriginal¹³ and Torres Strait Islander children are also under-represented in the use of formal child-care services in Australia. Indigenous children account for only 1.8 percent of children attending Commonwealth funded child-care services, yet comprise 3.5 percent of Australian children aged 0-4 years of age and 3.0 percent of children 5-11 years of age. Eighty five percent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children aged 0-12 years using some form of non-parental care arrangement¹⁴ were cared for only by family and friends (ABS, 1995b:7).

Table 8.3: Children with Additional Needs as a Proportion of all Children Using Formal Child-Care by Type of Arrangement, Australia, 1992/93.

TYPE OF FORMAL CARE	CHILDREN WITH A DISABILITY	CHILDREN WITH A DISABLED PARENT	CHILDREN DEEMED AT RISK	ATSIC ^a CHILDREN	NESB ^b CHILDREN	TOTAL SPECIAL NEEDS CHILDREN	ALL CHILDREN IN TYPE OF CARE
	<i>Percentage of Children</i>						<i>Number</i>
Long Day Care	2.4	0.7	0.5	1.0	12.2	16.8	181,171
Family Day Care	1.8	0.5	0.7	0.9	6.0	9.8	76,356
OSHCC ^c	2.2	0.3	0.3	1.5	11.1	15.5	49,808
Other Cared ^d	2.1	0.7	0.4	14.0	5.6	22.8	19,740
Total Formal	2.2	0.6	0.5	1.8	10.2	15.3	327,075
	<i>Number of Children</i>						
Total Formal	7,125	1,875	1,728	6,017	33,360	50,110	327,075

^a Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ^b Non-English Speaking Background

^c Outside School Hours Care

^d Other formal care includes occasional care, multifunctional children's services, multifunctional Aboriginal children's services and mobile and toy library services.

Source: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (1997) Table 4.14

The under-representation of indigenous children, disabled children and children from non-English speaking backgrounds using formal child-care arrangements in Australia, as shown in Table 8.3, raises questions about the inclusiveness, cultural

¹³ The term Aboriginal is commonly used in Australia to refer to all mainland indigenous people, distinguishing them from indigenous people living in the Torres Strait Islands. The term is used less frequently in Canada, sometimes encompassing all indigenous Canadians while at other times referring only to those who are neither Inuit or First Nation.

¹⁴ Of the 105,600 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children aged between 0-12 years in Australia, 54 percent or 57,024 children used some form of non-parental child-care arrangement in 1994 (AIHW, 1997).

appropriateness and accessibility of available and affordable formal child-care spaces for these children. Indeed, further research in this area is warranted, particularly as it has been argued that the inclusion of these children in regular child-care services is important for the children and the community as well as for the working parents of these children. For instance, the L'Institut Roehrer Institute in Canada has found that the integration of a disabled child into quality child-care provides an early opportunity for the child to develop friendships, to socialise and thrive in a stimulating environment. Formal child-care services can also provide support for the child's family, have a positive impact on parents who experience 'normalcy' and enhance the parents' expectations of their child's ability to grow and learn. Further, inclusive child-care can help communities deal with disabled children in an appropriate manner and widen the acceptance of these children within the community. If child-care services were also sensitive to cultural differences there is no reason why similar benefits could not be accrued for indigenous children and for children from non-English speaking backgrounds and for the communities in which they live.

Data on the proportion of Aboriginal children and of children with special needs using integrated and specialised services in Canada is unavailable. However, information on the availability and eligibility of integrated and specialised programs does provide some indication of how inclusive and appropriate child-care services are in Canada. Although only Quebec, British Columbia and the Yukon Territory have a written policy regarding the integration of children with special needs into regulated child-care services most Canadian provinces and territories favour integration over segregation (Friendly, 1994) and integrated services exist in all jurisdictions. Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, Ontario, and British Columbia are the only provinces to still have some segregated programs for children at risk, children with disabilities, and/or for children with behavioural problems (CRRU, 1997). Some provinces also provide extra funding for integrated programs or for fee assistance for the parents of children with special needs.

Services for indigenous children also vary from province to province. For instance, only Ontario, Alberta, British Columbia, the Northwest Territories and the Yukon Territory fund and license on-reserve child-care for First Nations and Inuit children¹⁵

¹⁵ See Appendix S for details on indigenous and special needs child-care by province and territory in Canada for 1995.

(CRRU, 1997). Federal First Nations/Inuit Child Care Initiative has also allocated funds for an additional 4078 spaces to be available across Canada by 1998 (CRRU, 1997). In New Brunswick and Quebec, on-reserve child-care services receive funding through special agreements between the federal and provincial governments and First Nations communities. Indian and Northern Affairs Canada provides funds in a cost-sharing agreement with the Alberta government for on-reserve child-care in that province. Manitoba, Ontario and Saskatchewan also have off-reserve services for indigenous children that are primarily funded by First Nations communities.

Coordination

Though it had been suggested that the federal governments role in Canada could be expanded to create a national child-care policy (Friendly, Rothman, & Oloman, 1991; Teghtsoonian, 1993), child-care advocates were made aware during the constitutional debates that a national child-care program would never eventuate if federal spending powers were reduced by the adoption of the Meech Lake or Charlottetown Accord (Goelman, 1992; Friendly, 1992). The 1993/94 Social Security Review offered an opportunity for advocates to reinforce the need for a national child-care program but the 1995 Federal Budget presented a potentially devastating message for child-care (Friendly & Oloman, 1995). The Canada Health and Social Transfer, a new block funding mechanism which took effect on April 1, 1996, has no identified child-care component. As such, it has clearly marked child-care as a provincial responsibility and has effectively restricted the federal government's role in child-care to the provision of funds and related services for indigenous (i.e., First Nations, Inuit and Aboriginal) people. This devolution of power to the provinces went far beyond anything discussed within the context of the Social Security Review.

The Development of a National Planning Framework

As was illustrated in Chapter IV and V, there appears little possibility for the development of a separate national planning framework for child-care in Canada. An opportunity, however, may exist for the inclusion of child-care in the Federal Government's proposed National Children's Agenda if the Government can be convinced that child-care is important to improving the well-being of Canada's children. In contrast, progress has been made toward the development of a national child-care program in Australia and efforts to that end continue, albeit hampered by changes in government, budget cuts, and the inevitable repetition in the research/consultation

process.

In 1996 while the Economic Planning Advisory Commission (EPAC) Task Force on Child Care was preparing its report, as discussed in Chapter V, the Department of Health and Family Services' was preparing a discussion paper on the development of a National Planning Framework. Efforts toward such a framework had already begun under a Labor government in February 1994. At that time, the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) agreed that the Commonwealth would commence discussions with the States and Territories on collecting data and identifying possible areas of reform in the general area of child-care. A reform strategy was agreed upon on March 2 1995, and in May 1995 a Commonwealth - State Working Group commenced work on a draft national framework for children's services, similar in orientation to the national frameworks already in place for health, education and community services programs (Council of Australian Governments Child Care Working Group, 1995).

The reform strategy included a two step process. The first step involved a multilateral agreement on a national framework for child-care. This would incorporate linkages with preschools/kindergartens and include agreed objectives, program outcomes, benchmarks and performance indicators. The second step concerned separate bilateral agreements between the Commonwealth and the States and Territories for implementation and administration arrangements deemed appropriate for the achievement of the agreed national objectives and outcomes.

The COAG Child Care Working Group released a discussion paper in October 1995. It outlined the problems with the existing system and raised issues related to the development of a national framework that would reform existing agreements and conditions for children's services linked to the National Child Care Strategies. It proposed broadening the focus of children's services to include preschool services, and to cover issues such as planning, quality and standards, access to services and monitoring program outcomes. Cost containment was presented as an important consideration and emphasis was given to the need for services to change to be more responsive to the changing needs and expectations of users, to be delivered more efficiently and effectively, and to be rationalised. It was suggested that '[i]ntegration of, or better coordination between, systems would achieve this' (COAG, 1995:2.6), particularly if 'the boundaries' between State and Commonwealth Governments were redrawn to clarify their roles in the provision of child-care (COAG, 1996:2.10).

The features of a new system and desirable program outcomes were presented. Five key areas for reform included: service provision and better linkages between services; standards and quality assurance; subsidy arrangements; policy coordination and evaluation; and program administration. These pertained to services for children under school age as well as to services for school aged children.

The Department of Health and Family Services discussion paper, released in 1996, sought community views on relevant child-care issues and presented three possible options for a National Planning Framework that would address these and other key issues facing the child-care industry. It focused primarily on the provision of long day care for 0-5 year olds.

It was stated that the purpose of the National Planning Framework is to 'articulate the Government's vision for delivering a sustainable child care system that provides accessible, affordable and high quality child care' (Government of Australia, 1996:1). The objectives were suggested to include: greater equity in access to high quality child-care places; a focus on meeting supply gaps for babies, additional needs children, extended hours and part-time/respite care; a greater focus on families with work-related child-care needs; greater certainty for parents and the industry; and most importantly for the Government, greater certainty of financial outlays. Nonetheless, each option focused primarily on the containment of government child-care expenditure by limiting new child-care spaces in number and location.

The first option targeted new services with minimal government interference in the operation of the market place. It proposed planning benchmarks for local areas, facilitated by a National Information Strategy which would inform and influence operators' in their decision making about the location of new services. The second option was for supply controls. This option proposed an absolute limit on the number of new places to be approved each year in the Budget context, similar to the National Child-care Strategies of the late 1980s and early 1990s, though more restrictive. The third option was to limit access to Childcare Assistance for non work related care, thus encouraging new services to locate in areas of unmet work related child-care demand. This option was implemented in the Howard Government's 1997/98 Budget.

As previously mentioned, the current child-care situation in Australia, as it is in Canada, is characteristic of geographic and socio-economic inequities. The extension of fee relief to families using private child-care centres and the resultant oversupply of

places in some areas has fostered the provision of non-work related care by private operators. While the inclusion of children for other than work-related reasons is recognised as beneficial for these children, their parents and the community in which they live, funding of non-work related child-care is generally perceived by the government as an inappropriate use of limited financial resources.

Despite its rhetoric supporting the comprehensiveness of the COAG proposal for the development of a National Planning Framework, the options proposed by the Department of Health and Family Services were more concerned about cost containment than they were about equity, access and the investment of taxpayers dollars in the social and cognitive development of all children in Australia. Indeed, submissions in response to the discussion paper

sought a planning framework for children's services which had a long term strategic focus, broader than any specific mechanism to manage the distribution of supply, and which would include within its scope the full range of services for children, provision for children with special needs and strategies to address continued improvement in quality assurance and services for families in areas of market failure. ... Investment in children's services was seen as having a role in the long term development of a social infrastructure and in promoting family choice and function. (Government of Australia, 1997:2.2)

Further, in contrast to the EPAC proposal for Childcare Assistance and Childcare Cash Rebate payments to be made directly to parents' bank accounts, a significant majority of industry representatives and families involved in the consultative process indicated that they preferred to continue to have these payments made directly to the child-care providers. That is, parents and child-care operators preferred a supply-side approach to child-care funding rather than the government's preferred demand-side approach. A National Planning Framework has yet to be implemented in any form by the Howard Government, with the exception of reduced Childcare Assistance and Childcare Cash Rebate payments and restricted child-care hours for non-work related reasons delivered in the last two federal Budgets¹⁶.

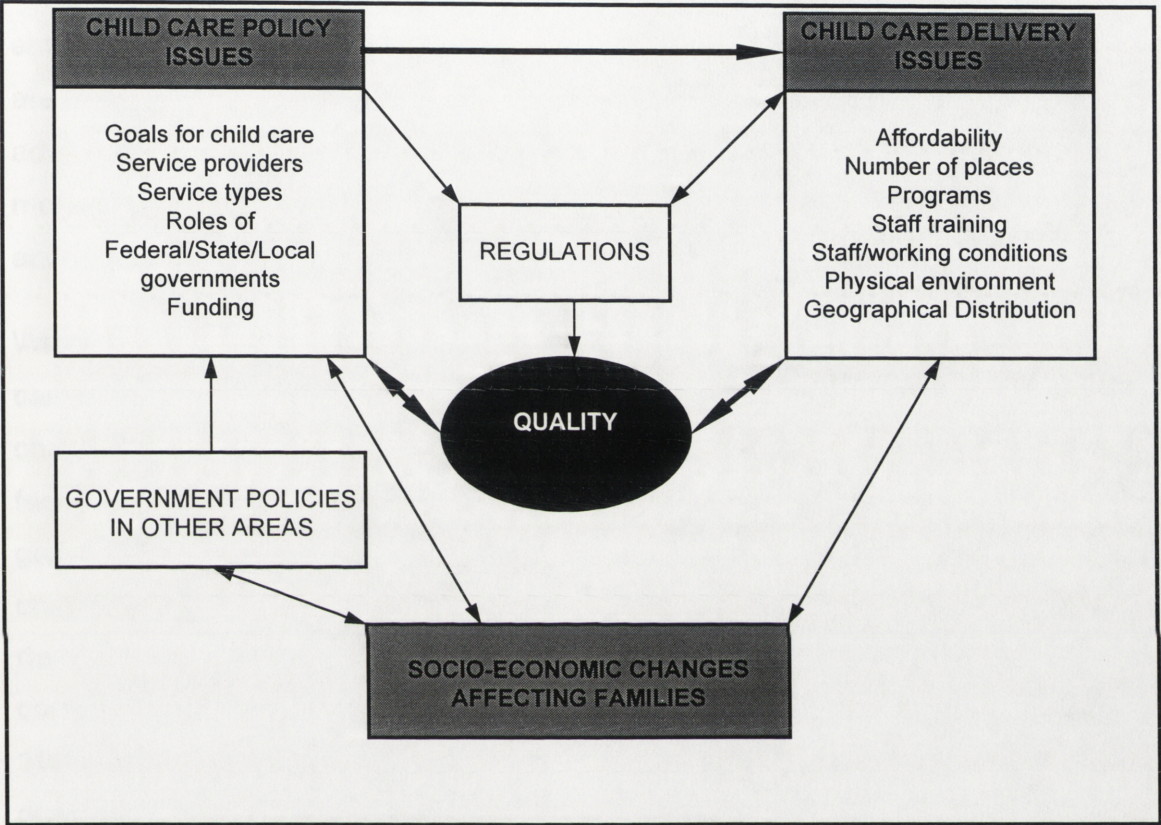
High Quality Care

While child-care advocates in Canada have persistently promoted high quality child-care, the issue of quality in the Australia has been overshadowed by the continued focus on the expansion of total available places. In 1985, the change in the basis for

¹⁶ The Howard Government Budgets were discussed in detail in Chapter VII.

operational subsidies, designed to fuel the expansion, shifted the responsibility for quality control from the Commonwealth Government to the State and Territory Governments: 'It broke the nexus between subsidies and training and, consequently, the direct link with quality control' (Wangmann, 1995:63).

Figure 8.4: Quality as an Interactive Outcome of Policy and Delivery



Source: Wangmann (1995:64) Figure 19.

Quality is not a single issue, it is an interactive outcome of policy and delivery, as shown in Figure 8.4. Child-care policy issues include goals, service providers, service types, the roles of federal, state and local governments and funding. Affordability, availability, programming, staff training, working conditions, the physical environment and geographical distribution of services constitute delivery issues. All of these issues are interrelated and have been discussed in earlier chapters.

Wangmann argues that

Given the requirement of an integrated national system, and given the diversity of the organisations and types of child care involved, the most appropriate basis for the definition and maintenance of quality standards is a national strategy incorporated within Commonwealth responsibilities and functions. (1995:65)

Movement towards the development of such a strategy in Australia has been made.

First, the National Child Care Centres Standards were developed. This was followed in 1993 with the establishment of the National Childcare Accreditation Council, discussed in more detail later in this chapter. No such national strategy exists in Canada, nor is one being developed.

According to Smith & Swaine (1988) quality child-care is associated with bright, curious, independent and friendly children who are similar to other children in their emotional ties with their mothers though tend to be more oriented towards their peers, are likely to interact with their peers more positively and more negatively, and are more advanced in their understanding of social and moral rules. Quality care helps children more towards competence in dealing with their physical, social and cognitive world, and is affordable and accessible for families meeting their goals.

While quality care is difficult to define, it is generally agreed upon that the quality of care should be good or of a high standard. Good or high quality child-care is characteristic of a number of components. These characteristics and the contextual factors which promote or contribute to good quality care have been identified from a growing body of research, primarily in developmental psychology, on the effect of child-care centre experiences on children's intellectual and/or social-emotional development, on children's play, and on children's peer relations. Several comprehensive reviews (Belsky & Sternberg, 1978; Clarke-Stewart, 1982; Belsky, 1984; Phillips, 1987; Smith & Swain, 1988, Ochiltree, 1994; Doherty, 1995) reveal the common components of good quality child-care that are consistently found despite problems inherent in the research¹⁷. Although the research pertains predominantly with child-care provided in day care centres, many of the components are applicable to other child-care services, such as family day care, occasional care and outside school hours care.

Physical Environment

A good quality child-care service has adequate space, appropriate equipment, and facilities that promote good health, nutrition and safety. In Australia and Canada, minimum regulatory standards for the physical environment of a child-care centre are set by state / provincial and territory authorities. These standards must be met or

¹⁷ See Singer (1992) for a comprehensive discussion of the methodological and theoretical problems associated with research in this area.

exceeded if the centre is to receive and retain a license to operate.

Staff- Child Ratios for Under 3 Year Olds

Staff-child ratios have been shown to have a definite impact on staff behaviour, staff attitudes, staff-child interactions, child function and centre quality. The significance of the ratio varies for different age groups. For instance, infants require a higher staff to child ratio than do older age groups. The accepted threshold ratio for good infant care is 1:4, while a threshold of 1:9 is considered adequate for five year olds (Phillips, 1987). Since the number of children that any one adult can interact with in a positive fashion is limited, it is generally agreed that the higher the staff ratio the more likely the care will be of high quality. That is, staff are more likely to be sensitive and responsive to children and their caregiving will be more likely to be appropriate for the child's needs. Moreover, staff are more likely to have higher job satisfaction and lower rates of turnover which ensure staffing stability or consistent caregiving. This in turn contributes to high levels of responsive interaction between the staff and their charges (Doherty, 1991 & 1995a).

Table 8.4: Legislated Staff-Child Ratios for Day Care Centres, Canada, 1995.

PROVINCE/TERRITORY	2 YEARS	4 YEARS	6 YEARS
Newfoundland & Labrador	1:6	1:8	1:8
Prince Edward Island	1:5	1:10	1:12
Nova Scotia	1:7	1:7	1:15
New Brunswick	1:5	1:10	1:15
Quebec	1:8	1:8	1:15
Ontario	1:5	1:8	1:15
Manitoba	1:6	1:9	1:15
Saskatchewan	1:5	1:10	1:15
Alberta	1:6	1:8	1:10
British Columbia	1:4	1:8	1:8
Northwest Territories	1:6	1:9	1:10
Yukon Territory	1:6	1:8	1:12

Source: CRRU (1997:94-95) Tables 12.

Staff-child ratios vary from jurisdiction to jurisdiction in Canada and in Australia. The staff-child standard ratio in many jurisdictions is lower than the accepted threshold. This includes a staff-child ratio of 1:5 for children under three years of age in Australia set by the National Child Care Centre Standards. As Table 8.4 illustrates, British Columbia has the highest staff-child ratio in Canada for two year olds, while Quebec has the lowest ratio for children of this age group. In Australia, Tasmania's staff to infant (under 1 years) ratio of 1:3 is the highest. Three states have staff to infant ratios

that are higher than the national standards while two states and the two territories have staff to child ratios that are higher than the national standards for children three years and older. Two Australian states do, however, have lower ratios for this older age group.

In Canada, the average staff to child ratios for four year olds is 1:8 with Nova Scotia having the highest ratio at 1:7. For six year olds, the average staff to child ratio is 1:15. At 1:8, British Columbia and Newfoundland have the highest staff to child ratios for this age group. Overall, Australia's staff to child ratios for the under three year olds, shown in Table 8.5, are slightly higher than those in Canada, while the staff to child ratios for children over three years of age are generally higher in Canada.

Table 8.5: Legislated Staff-Child Ratios for Long Day Care Centres by State and Territory, Australia, 1995.

STATE/TERRITORY	<1 YEAR	1 YEAR	2 YEARS	3 YEARS AND OVER
National Standards ^a		- 1:5 -		1:11
Western Australia	1:4	1:4	1:5	1:10
South Australia	1:5	1:5	1:5	1:11
Northern Territory	1:5	1:5	1:5	1:10
Queensland	1:4	1:5	1:6	1:12
New South Wales	1:5	1:5	1:8	1:10
ACT	1:5	1:5	1:5	1:10
Victoria	1:5	1:5	1:5	1:15
Tasmania	1:3	1:5	1:7	1:11

^aThe National Child Care Standards are set for under three year olds and for children three years and over.

Source: AIHW (1997) Table 4.18.

A survey of school age child-care services in Australia found that while most services would appear to have adequate staff to child ratios, having equal to or higher than one staff contact per fifteen children, many services would not meet the national standards due to services operating with single staffing (Department of Health and Family Services, 1997). Single staffing has been found to have problems associated with safety and program quality.

Group Size for Preschool Aged Children

Group size refers to the number of children one caregiver can be responsible for at any given time. It has been shown that group size is more important than ratios for children aged three to five years in terms of influencing the quality of experiences: the smaller the group the more likely children will facilitate sensitive and responsive caregiver behaviours. For the under three year old age group ratios and group size

are equally important.

Table 8.6: Legislated Group Size for Day Care Centres, Canada, 1995.

PROVINCE/TERRITORY	2 YEARS	4 YEARS	6 YEARS
Newfoundland & Labrador	1:6	1:8	1:8
Prince Edward Island	1:5	1:10	1:12
Nova Scotia	1:7	1:7	1:15
New Brunswick	1:5	1:10	1:15
Quebec	1:8	1:8	1:15
Ontario	1:5	1:8	1:15
Manitoba	1:6	1:9	1:15
Saskatchewan	1:5	1:10	1:15
Alberta	1:6	1:8	1:10
British Columbia	1:4	1:8	1:8
Northwest Territories	1:6	1:9	1:10
Yukon Territory	1:6	1:8	1:12

Source: CRRU (1997:94-95) Tables 13.

The National Child Care Centre Standards in Australia do not address group size, and licensing regulations in only three states provide group size specifications. All but two provinces/territories in Canada specify group size in their day care regulations. These specifications, shown in Table 8.6, are generally lower than those recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) in the United States of America. The NAEYC recommends that there be no more children than 12 per group for children under two years of age, no more than 20 children per group for 2 and 3 year olds and no more than 20 children per group for preschool children aged 4 to 5 years. Whatever the age of the child research has shown ‘that a greater amount of one-to-one adult-child interaction is associated with positive outcomes’ (Smith & Swain, 1988:44-45). Further, research in Australia and New Zealand suggests that improving the ratio of trained staff to children has an important effect on reducing aggressive behaviour and negative interactions between children in preschool settings (Smith & Swain, 1988).

Staff Qualifications - Training and Experience

Research has consistently shown that staff training is an important contributing component of child-care quality. Primary contact staff with specialised early childhood education qualifications are much more likely to engage with children in significantly more developmentally appropriate caregiving across all ages than are untrained staff (Phillips, 1987; Smith & Swain, 1988; Doherty, 1991 & 1995a). Judy Wangmann notes that in Australia significant variations between the states and territories exist in formal training in early childhood education and care. Qualifications range from six month

certificates and two year diploma level courses received from the Council of Adult Education or Technical and Further Education institutions to three year bachelor degree courses from universities. Tertiary qualifications in early childhood education is required in long day care centres to supervise the educational development of children, and a nursing qualification is considered appropriate for care of children under three, although training may not have included child development (McNeice, Moyle & Mercer, 1995: 22-6). The National Standards for Centre Based Long Day Care recognise the importance of child-care related training recommending staff working in a qualified position have at least a 2 year accredited post-secondary course in child-care or a 3 year accredited tertiary course in early childhood care or education (Standards for Centre Based Long Day Care, 1993:40). The National Standards for Family Day Care are less prescriptive in terms of qualifications. They emphasise, instead, competencies such as 'an appropriate understanding of children's needs and development', 'responsiveness', effective communication and sensitivity (National Standards for Family Day Care, 1995:39).

Table 8.7: Staff Qualifications by Service Type for Commonwealth Funded Child-Care Services, Australia, 1994^a.

SERVICE TYPE	NUMBER OF STAFF ^b	CHILD-CARE SPECIFIC TRAINING ^c	TEACHING	NURSING	CURRENTLY TRAINING OR 3 YEARS EXPERIENCE	IN-SERVICE TRAINING ^d
Long Day Care ^e	29,300	56 %	25 %	16 %	na	64 %
Family Day Care ^f	1,800	66 %	-	-	na	-
Outside School Hours Care	5,730	10 %	26 %	3 %	30 %	55 %
Vacation Care	1,180	10 %	28 %	2 %	15 %	na
Occasional Care	920	28 %	6 %	10 %	26 %	55 %
Mobile / Toy Library Services	110	14 %	26 %	9 %	18 %	50 %
Multifunctional Aboriginal Services	370	18 %	7 %	4 %	32 %	55 %
Multifunctional Services	140	22 %	6 %	5 %	34 %	64 %

^a The Census for long day care and family day care services was carried out in 1993.

^b This represents paid staff. There were also 3,900 people assisting these services on an unpaid basis.

^c Child-care specific qualifications include certificates, diplomas and degrees in early childhood education.

^d In-service training undertaken during last 12 months.

^e This includes community-based (13,200), private (13,600), employer sponsored and non-profit (2,500) long day care centres.

^f Percentages for qualifications other than for formal child-care specific training are included in Long Day Care percentages.

Sources: Department of Human Services and Health (1995); Department of Health and Family Services (1997).

Of all staff in Commonwealth funded child-care services, 46 percent were reported to

have formal qualifications, though the proportion of those with child-care specific training, depicted in Table 8.7 (above), varied between service types. For instance, the proportion of staff with child-care qualifications was lowest at 10 percent for outside school hours care and vacation care and highest at 66 percent for family day care staff (those in co-ordinating units for family day care schemes). However, only 16 percent of family day care caregivers, the individuals who provide care and activities in their own homes for other people's children, had formal qualifications (Department of Human Services and Health, 1995).

There is no comparable data on the level and type of qualifications of child-care workers in Canada. However, as in a few states in Australia, some provinces, as shown in Figure 8.5 (overleaf), have set minimum early childhood training requirements for some child-care workers. None of the provinces require that all or most of the staff in a program or service be trained in early childhood education at a post-secondary level, only British Columbia requires specialised training for staff working with infants and only Prince Edward Island requires staff to participate in in-service training on an on-going basis (Friendly, 1994).

Only a few provinces have training requirements for family day care providers¹⁸, although the majority require caregivers to have a current first aid certificate. Some of the provinces family day care agencies provide training for providers even though their provincial government have no official training requirements. However, in Prince Edward Island, Quebec and the Yukon Territories caregivers must have completed a training program of specified duration before they provide a family day care service (CRRU, 1997).

¹⁸ Gursnasky, Camilleri, Harvey & Kennedy (1994) provide details on what an Australian policy for family should include.

Figure 8.5: Minimum Early Childhood Training Requirements for Day Care Staff by Province/Territory, Canada, 1995.

PROVINCE / TERRITORY	SUPERVISOR / DIRECTOR	OTHER STAFF
Newfoundland & Labrador	Either 1 yr ECE and 1 yr experience or 2 yr ECE	Two trained staff recommended for centre with 25 spaces or more
Prince Edward Island	1 yr ECE plus 30 hrs in-service every 3 yrs	1 additional staff - 1 yr ECE plus 30 hrs in-service every 3 yrs
Nova Scotia	1 yr ECE or 2 yrs experience plus 1 yr course and 35 hour workshop and First Aid	2/3 staff - 1 yr ECE or 2 yrs experience and 1 course plus 35 hour workshop and First Aid
New Brunswick	None (First Aid)	None (First Aid)
Quebec	Not specified	1/3 centre staff - 2yr ECE or 3 yrs experience plus certificate
Ontario	2 yr ECE and 2 yr experience	1 staff per group - 2 yr ECE resource staff with 2yr ECE or related post-secondary training
Manitoba	Approved CCW III plus 2 yr ECE or 3 yr ECE degree plus 1 yr experience	All staff - First Aid 2/3 FT staff with CCW II (2yr ECE diploma)
Saskatchewan	1 yr ECE	All staff - 130 hrs orientation or 1yr ECE 1 staff with First Aid Additional training for special needs
Alberta	2 yr ECE	1/4 staff - 1 yr ECE
British Columbia	Not specified	1 staff per group 2yr olds - Basic 10 mths ECE plus 500 hrs experience 1 staff per 5-8 infant/toddlers - Basic plus infant / toddler training 1 staff for 25% special needs - Basic plus special needs training
Northwest Territories	None	None
Yukon Territory	None	1/2 staff - 60 hr intro course By 1999, 30% staff - 1 yr ECE By 2000, 20% - 2+ yr ECE

Source: CRRU (1997)

Staff Turnover and Staff Working Conditions

Research has found that high staff turnover has a major effect upon the quality of staff - child interactions. It also makes adjustment to child-care a difficult and stressful experience for children and is associated with poor school performances and with children who exhibit insecurity. Conversely, lower staff turnover or high staffing stability is associated with less child anxiety, less wandering, a less stressful child care environment, and better attachment to, and more interaction, with caregivers (Doherty, 1995a).

Staff turnover rates in Australia have been found to range from 17.4 percent for all long day care centre staff (Baker and Robertson, 1992) to 85.8 percent for primary contact staff working in community centres in New South Wales (Community Child Care in New South Wales cited in Wangmann, 1995:79). Staff turnover was found to be

associated with unsatisfactory working conditions, lack of job satisfaction, and a desire to leave the child-care industry for other employment, further education or for a better paying job. Low wages, poor morale, stress, under-payment, and compulsory unpaid overtime, all contributed to burnout. This indicates, as Wangmann has suggested, that 'the principle factor in staff turnover appears to relate to the low status attributed to child care workers: that is, society does not value the profession very highly' (1995:80). This is perpetuated, to an extent, in the child-care literature by the lack of attention given to the conditions under which child-care workers are employed.

It has been argued that a complex combination of industrial and political factors interact with gender to produce poor working conditions for, and the exploitation of, child-care workers (Bennett, 1991:20). In an examination of the child-care industry in Australia, Bennett shows how government funding and policy play a crucial role. For instance, varying state government regulations decide staff-child ratios, as described above, while industrial awards prescribe rates of pay, which are generally low. As the EPAC Task Force noted in its final report:

[p]ay rates for child care workers are below those for occupations with similar proportions of workers with education and training, and even below unskilled occupations such as shop assistants or car park attendants. Another industrial feature of the child care sector is the lack of career paths. (EPAC, 1996:13)

Eighty percent of child-care workers in Australia earn less than \$13 per hour. Centre directors receive \$17 per hour on average while those with early childhood teaching qualifications may earn up to \$20 per hour (Lyons, 1996). Workers employed in the commercial sector generally have lower rates of pay than their non-profit counterparts (McNeice, Moyle and Meyer, 1995). Although it is generally acknowledged by the government that pay rates for child-care workers are very low, pay increases tend to be retarded by the reliance of the industry on government funding. Moreover, it has been argued that child-care has been defined in Australia by the government in terms of cost and access, which has, consequently, been at the expense of quality and allowed the government to substantially meet demand through the cheapest possible means and to depress conditions in the industry (Bennett, 1991; Wangmann, 1995). Similar circumstances are found in some Canadian provinces.

As in Australia, the wages of Canadian child-care workers are a key predictor of staff turnover, level of training, and other indicators of quality (Canadian Day Care Advocacy Association/Canadian Child Care Federation, 1992). Similarly, family day

care providers offer a cheaper form of child-care than do their centre-based counterparts, as shown in Table 8.8 below. Family day care providers earned between \$8 and \$27 per day per child in 1991, slightly more in some provinces in 1995, varying by province, age and number of children. In some provinces, caregivers earn more if they care for a child with special needs. On average, this equates with around \$2.45 per hour or an annual wage of \$3,862. The mean hourly wage for staff working in full-time centred-based programs was \$8.69. Wages ranged from \$5.57 per hour for assistant teachers in Newfoundland to \$17.81 for administrative directors in the Northwest Territories. Teachers typically earn more than assistants, while teacher directors command an hourly wage somewhere between that of a teacher and that of an administrative director. It is not surprising then that it has been asserted that 'regulated child care in Canada has been carried by the staff who help subsidise the programs in which they work through their low salaries and poor benefits' (Friendly, 1994:191). Indeed, among all female-dominated job categories in Canada in 1993, child-care was the most poorly paid (Statistics Canada, 1993a).

Table 8.8: Mean Hourly Wage Rate in Child-Care Centres and Family Day Care, Canada, 1991 & 1995^a.

PROVINCE / TERRITORY	CENTRE BASED DAY CARE		FAMILY DAY CARE		
	1991	1995	1991	1991	1995
	Per Hour		Per Hour ^b	Per Day	
Newfoundland & Labrador	\$6.02	na	-	-	na
Prince Edward Island	\$7.73	\$7.99	\$2.84	\$17.04	na
Nova Scotia	\$7.95	na	\$2.42	\$14.50	na
New Brunswick	\$6.50	na	\$2.08	\$12.50	na
Quebec	\$9.30	\$10.08	\$2.48	\$14.88	\$16.99
Ontario	\$11.38	na	\$2.98	\$17.90	na
Manitoba	\$9.85	na	\$2.73	\$16.40	\$15.80
Saskatchewan	\$7.94	\$11.32	\$2.23	\$13.40	\$14.09
Alberta	\$6.95	na	\$2.27	\$13.64	
British Columbia	\$9.06	na	\$3.03	\$18.18	
Northwest Territories	\$11.80	\$13.38	\$3.75	\$22.50	\$25.00
Yukon Territory	\$9.75	\$12.51	\$32.92	\$197.50	\$197.50
Canada	\$8.69 per hour	\$11.04	\$2.44 per hour ^d		na
	\$52.14 per day		^c \$14.63 per day ^d		
	\$14,600 pa ^{e c}		\$3,862 pa ^{d e}		

^a 1995 data is available for only a few provinces. ^b Calculated from day rates based on 6 hour days.

^c Mean based on a 7.5 hour day. ^d Means do not include Yukon Territory. ^e Per annum wages based on 22 days per month for 12 months.

Source: CRRU (1994, 1997).

Child-care work is almost entirely done by women and as with many female dominated occupations, child-care has minimal union organisation. This impedes skill recognition and career opportunities, keeps wages low and staff turnover rates high (Bennett, 1991; Friendly, 1994). Conversely, where there is union membership - primarily in

local/municipal government centres¹⁹ - it is closely associated with higher rates of pay, job tenure and higher levels of relevant training (Lyons, 1996). For instance, in 1984 the hourly rates for non-unionised staff and staff working in a municipal child-care centre were \$5.47 and \$10.58 respectively (Ferguson, 1991:78), and in 1991 the hourly rate for unionised staff was 33 percent higher than for staff not represented by a union (Friendly, 1994). As in Australia, union membership for child-care workers is inhibited by the small numbers of workers in a child-care setting, the geographical isolation of centres from each other, and by the widespread use of casual and part-time staff (EPAC, 1996:28; Friendly, 1994).

Contextual Factors

Two contextual factors promote high quality care. These are regulation and funding. Doherty (1995) also includes auspice as a contextual factor since research in Canada and the USA has indicated, though not conclusively, that non-profit child-care centres are of higher quality than are for-profit or commercial centres (Ontario Coalition for Better Day Care, 1987; Friendly, 1994; Gormley, 1995).

Regulation

The presence and strength of regulation in child-care has been related to a number of characteristics of quality such as better staff to child ratios, lower rates of infectious illness, better trained staff, lower staff turnover, and more developmentally appropriate staff/child interactions. Regulations involve the establishment, application and monitoring of minimum standards below which programs may not legally operate and the use of sanctions to ensure that programs meet the standards (Wangmann, 1995). Figure 8.6 (overleaf) lists the various legislation and regulations that set standards in the states/provinces and territories in Australia and Canada²⁰.

Despite current knowledge about the key components of quality necessary to promote good developmental outcomes for children, standards vary widely. In Australia, outside school hours care is unregulated and family day care is regulated in only three states. In Canada, child-care licensing requirements in most jurisdictions simply

¹⁹ Based on an analysis of a study of staff working in sixty long day care centres in Sydney and Melbourne, Lyons summarises that union membership for local government employees goes with the public service job, rather than with the female-dominated occupation of child-care worker (1996:638).

²⁰ See Gormley & Peters (1992) for national styles of regulation in the USA, Sweden and the UK.

ensure that the service does not harm a child. As Doherty has argued, they do not extend beyond the level of basic health and safety provisions and 'generally do not address what is necessary to encourage the development of children's physical, social, language and thinking skills' (Doherty, 1995:30).

Quality Improvement and Accreditation

Figure 8.6: Federal and State / Provincial Legislation and Regulations for Child-Care in Canada and Australia, 1997.

CANADIAN LEGISLATION	
<i>Federal</i>	Canada Assistance Plan 1966
<i>Provincial</i>	
British Columbia	Community Care Facility Act, 1988; British Columbia child Care Regulation 319/89 ammended to 1476/89; Guaranteed Available Income for Need (GAIN) Act, 1979.
Alberta	Social Care Facilities Act, 1980, ammended; Alberta Day Care Regulation 333/90 ammended 1980.
Saskatchewan	The Child Care Act, Bill 8, 1990; Child Care Regulations, 1990.
Manitoba	The Community Child Day Care Standards Act, 1983, ammended 1986; Manitoba Child Day Care Regulations, 148/83, 62/86, 23/87, ammended 1986.
Ontario	The Day Nurseries Act, revised 1990; Ontario Regulation 262, 1990.
Quebec	An Act Respecting Child Day Care, ammended 1992; Regulation Respecting Child Day Care Centres, ammended 1992.
New Brunswick	Family Services Act, 1980; Family Services Regulations, 1983, ammended 1992.
Prince Edward Island	The Child Care Facilities Act, 1988; Child Care Facilities Regulations, 1988; The Welfare Assistance Act, 1988.
Nova Scotia	Day Care Act and Regulations, 1980.
Newfoundland & Labrador	Day Care and Homemaker Services Act 1990; Newfoundland Regulation 219/82 ammended to O.C. 979/82; Day Care and Preschool Licensing Requirements, Newfoundland and Labrador 1991-92.
Northwest Territories	The Northwest Territories Child Day Care Act, 1988; Child Day Care Standards and Regulations, 1988.
Yukon	The Child Care Act, 1990; Family Day-Home Regulations and Child Care centre Regulations, 1990.
AUSTRALIAN LEGISLATION	
<i>Federal</i>	Child Care Act 1972; Standards for Centre Based Long Day Care, July 1993; Draft National Standards for Family Day Care, October 1993; Draft National Standards for Outside School Hours Care, January, 1994
<i>State</i>	
Western Australia	Community Services (Child Care) Regulations 1988 ;
South Australia	Children's Services Act 1985;
Northern Territory	Community Welfare Act 1983
Queensland	Child Care Act 1991;
New South Wales	Centre-Based Child Care Services Regulations 1989; Family Day Care Services Regulations 1989
ACT	Children's Services Act 1986; Children's Services Regulations 1987
Victoria	Children's Services Regulations 1988
Tasmania	Child Welfare Act 1960

Sources: Friendly, 1991; Law Reform Commission, 1994.

In Australia, access to Commonwealth funding such as Childcare Assistance is tied to

quality assurance and accreditation with the National Childcare Accreditation Council. Child-care funding in Canada is not tied to standards or accreditation and, as mentioned in the previous chapter, federal expenditure no longer has national requirements that must be met by provincial administrations in order to be eligible for cost-sharing funds. Licensing and the regulation of standards in child-care centres and family day care homes is the responsibility of states/provinces/territories in both Australia and Canada.

In 1991, the (then) Labor Government established the National Childcare Accreditation Council. The Council has since developed and implemented a Quality Improvement and Accreditation System, the first in the world to be initiated, funded and supported by the Commonwealth Government (NCAC, 1993). This system was designed to 'assist childcare providers and parents with the advice, support and training they need to help ensure that all children receive high quality care' (The National Childcare Accreditation Council, 1993). It acknowledges the increased understanding of the significance of the first six years of life, the continuing rise in demand for formal child-care, and the growth in the average number of hours an individual child spends in care. The system is based on the belief that a good quality long day care centre has a clear philosophy and goals that guide all activities, that it appreciates and fosters the individuality of all children, that it considers the developmental appropriateness of all activities affecting children, and that it fosters staff and parent interaction so they can support each other in their complementary roles. Fifty-two principles address these four areas; twenty of these are core principles which must receive a 'good quality' rating if the centre is to be accredited. There are four standards or ratings for most principles - unsatisfactory, basic, good quality and high quality - defined according to characteristic attitudes, activities and practices. If a centre is rated unsatisfactory in relation to any of the Principles it cannot be accredited. It may, however, continue to receive Childcare Assistance if it is considered to be making satisfactory progress against a Plan of Action to improve the standard required.

As shown in Table 8.9 (overleaf), 3,106 long day care centres in Australia were accredited by November 1997. That is, 73 percent of long day care centres in Australia achieved accreditation, while 5 percent failed to be accredited and were working through a Plan of Action. The remaining 21 percent of long day care centres were either undertaking self-study, review or awaiting a decision by the National Childcare Accreditation Council on their accreditation status. Of the accredited centres,

the majority (55 percent) achieved the maximum accreditation of 3 years, 27 percent were accredited for two years, and one third achieved accreditation for only 1 year. These figures indicate that at least one quarter of all Australian long day care centres eligible to receive Commonwealth Childcare Assistance are of high quality, while only 5 percent failed to meet national standards.

Table 8.9: Level of Accreditation of Long Day Care Programs in Australia, November 1997.

ACCREDITATION STATUS	TOTAL
Accredited with 1 year between reviews	1020
Accredited with 2 year between reviews	350
Accredited with 3 year between reviews	1736
Working through a Plan of Action	217
Undertaking self-study, review, in Moderation or awaiting Council decision	908
TOTAL	4231

Note: All long day care centres eligible to receive Commonwealth Childcare Assistance are registered and participating in the Quality Improvement and Accreditation System.
Source: National Childcare Accreditation Council Inc. (1998)

Responsiveness & Appropriateness

High quality child-care is developmentally and culturally appropriate and responsive to the individual needs of each child. High quality child-care is thus highly dependent upon the caregivers knowledge, expertise, attitudes and appropriate interaction with the children in their care. Despite many inconsistencies within the research, one clear conclusion has emerged:

one of the determining components of quality which can be consistently identified is the nature of the everyday interactions that occur between adults and children in child care settings. It is the nature of such interactions that provides the clearest indication of the quality of the program. (Wangmann, 1995:82)²¹

This highlights the importance of child-care related training and experience for child-care workers.

In Canada, indigenous organisations have pointed out that general standards for child-care centres are sometimes too rigid for northern and/or remote communities and that they may not reflect traditional cultural norms and practices (CRRU, 1993; 1995). In response, the federal government has provided grants through the Child Care

²¹ References include Ruopp, Travers, Glantz & Coelen (1979), Clarke-Stewart (1981), Clarke-Stewart & Gruber (1984), Berk (1985), Phillips, McCartney, & Scarr (1987), Howes (1990), Whitebook, Howes & Phillips (1989).

Initiatives Fund (Health and Welfare Canada, 1990-1995), for projects such as the First Nations Child and Youth Care Education and Career Ladder Program, designed by the School of Child and Youth Care at the University of Victoria in cooperation with the Meadow Lake Tribal Council of Saskatchewan, to strengthen the capacity of First Nation communities to provide sustainable, culturally sensitive care for their children and youth. In Australia, the Multifunctional Aboriginal Children's Services program is similarly designed to assist indigenous communities with their child-care needs with a 'headstart' focus on child development.

In contrast, the cultural needs of children from non-English speaking backgrounds appear to be less adequately met in both Canada and Australia. Whether the under-representation of such children in formal child-care programs reflects the cultural inappropriateness of typical child-care centre programs and/or contributes to the status quo is difficult to determine. Indeed, this is an issue that requires more research.

Accountability

The providers of non-parental child-care must be accountable to those who use and fund their services. That is the community, by way of tax payers money, and the parents who pay fees need to be ensured that their child-care providers are indeed providing good quality care for their charges. Good quality child-care is expensive, especially for babies, and therefore demands the efficient use of relatively scarce resources. Providers can be kept accountable through licensing, quality assurance and regulatory procedures that include accreditation and program monitoring. As previously mentioned, all states/provinces and territories in Australia and Canada have legislation pertaining to child-care standards and regulations in child-care centres and family day care, though many child-care spaces in Canada remain unregulated and program monitoring in both countries is often less than adequate due to insufficient human and financial resources.

Locations

Fincher has noted that '[a] woman's class, ethnicity and residential location make a difference to her interest in, and capacity to use child care provisions' (1996:144). The data on variations in the use of different types of child-care arrangements, presented in Chapter 6, support this observation. However, the spatial distribution of child-care does not necessarily correspond to the needs of local communities. For example, the

rapid expansion of child-care centres in Australia in the early 1990s resulted in an oversupply in areas such as the Gold Coast in Queensland and on the north coast of New South Wales and an undersupply in other areas, particularly in small urban and rural areas. Oversupply does not appear to be a problem in any region within Canada, though shortages and spatial inequities exist in many jurisdictions; rural and low income areas deemed unprofitable or unattractive by private operators tend to be under serviced. Skelton argues, that in Ontario, the persistence of such inequities appears to be 'a pervasive result of a decentralized delivery system in which the development of service depends on the success of initiatives in localities' (1996:74).

Summary

An ideal comprehensive national child-care system incorporates a variety of service delivery models that provide affordable, high quality, inclusive or universally accessible, flexible, appropriate, responsive, publicly funded and regulated child-care which is nationally planned, coordinated and accountable. While no country can boast of having an ideal comprehensive national child-care system, some countries, such as Denmark, Sweden and Finland, have systems that exhibit many of the ideal characteristics²². Other western democratic countries, such as the United States²³ and Canada, do not have a national system of child-care at all. Australia falls somewhere between these two extremes having a national system of funding for formal child-care and national standards for long day care.

It was demonstrated in this chapter that both Australia and Canada lack many of the necessary characteristics for a comprehensive national child-care system. Australia, fares better than Canada when compared to the ideal. This is primarily a result of the Commonwealth Children's Service's Program which ties federal dollars to quality assurance in formal child-care services across Australia. In addition, National Standards have been devised for long day care and family day care programs, though licensing and regulation of formal child-care in Australia, as it is in Canada, is the responsibility of the states and territories. Nonetheless, the system of child-care in Australia is neither universal nor equitable. Although a national planning system is

²² See Kamerman & Kahn (1991, 1994, 1995, 1996) for a comparison of child-care in eight European countries.

²³ Kamerman & Kahn (1991, 1996) discuss the implications the eight European child-care systems studied have for child-care in the United States.

being devised for Australia, at current there is little integration, planning and co-ordination of formal services, and between government support for parental, informal and formal child-care arrangements. The lack of planning and co-ordination, in addition to the extreme complexity of structure, funding, administration, regulation and delivery of children's services (AIHW, 1997), have led to inevitable market failures, such as inequities, oversupply in some areas and for older preschool children, and undersupply in other areas and for the youngest age groups.

In Canada, government support for child-care is, for the most part, a provincial concern. While the federal government has, in the past, made available funds to the provinces specifically for child-care subsidies, it is now entirely up to the provinces as to how they distribute block funds provided by the federal government. Provinces are also responsible for the provision of maternity and parental leave benefits. Consequently, the level of funding for child-care, and the availability, affordability, inclusiveness and quality of child-care in Canada, varies considerably from province to province.

When compared with an ideal child-care system, the differences between Australia and Canada are more obvious than their similarities²⁴. Government support for formal child-care in Canada more nearly resembles that of the typical 'liberal' welfare state. Public support for child-care is targeted and child-care arrangements are primarily market and family based, differing by type, cost, and quality according to family incomes. While Australia lacks adequate maternity and parental leave benefits and child-care is mostly family based and increasingly provided by the market, formal child-care is subsidised by the federal government, generally of high quality, and organised to accommodate the needs of working families. As such, the child-care system in Australia shares some similarities with child-care systems considered among the best in the western democratic world, that is, with child-care systems in 'social democratic' welfare states.

²⁴ See Appendix T for a summary of government support for child-care in Australia and Canada during the mid 1990s.

CHAPTER IX

CONCLUSION: CHILD-CARE IN AUSTRALIA AND CANADA

Introduction

Throughout the 1980s rapid social change occurred in Australia, Canada, and elsewhere in the western democratic world. Perhaps the most significant change has been the increase in labour force participation of women with preschool aged children (Maas, 1990; Lero, 1993). Consequently, the issue of child-care has received a great deal of attention in Australia, North America and in Europe. The focus of discussions and parliamentary debates has primarily been on how governments can help families balance work and family responsibilities. Only some of the European countries have seriously considered the interests of children in these debates. Issues of supply, quality, financing, costs to government and parents, staffing and curriculum have been prominent in discussions.

The European countries with the most comprehensive child-care systems tend to have goals that respond to a broad set of needs that encompass the interests of children, mothers and fathers, families, local communities and governments (Kamerman & Kahn, 1995). In contrast, the emphasis of government support for child-care in Canada and Australia has been the support of child-care for the children of parents in paid employment.

This thesis has examined the development of child-care and related policies in Australia and Canada. It has attempted to clarify the objectives and outcomes of child-care policy in these two 'similar' welfare states. In addition, it investigated the similarities and differences in policy formation, actual policies and policy outcomes, both intended and unintended. Further, the impact of policy outcomes for different families and for different family members was briefly examined.

Child-Care Policy Formation in Canada and Australia: Similarities and Differences

The historical development of child-care in Australia and in Canada is very similar, at least up until the late 1980s. In both countries, the development of child-care services was accompanied by the separation of services providing education, (i.e., preschools, kindergartens and nursery schools), and services providing care, (i.e., long day care

services). In recent years, the differences between the two types of services have become less distinct.

Both systems were shaped by the energies of women working in, or closely allied with, community-based/organisations (Heitlinger, 1993). In Australia, women involved in the development of child-care services have included 'the philanthropists of the late nineteenth century to the feminists, trade unionists and bureaucrats of the last two decades' (Brennan, 1994:213). The women's movement in Canada has been less successful in promoting child-care at the federal level than it has been in Australia.

As the discussion in Chapters 4 and 5 indicated, political, economic and social conditions, during the late 1980s and early 1990s, were more favourable to the implementation and extension of a national child-care strategy in Australia, than they were in Canada. Indeed, Australia already had the 1972 Child Care Act on which a national policy could be built. In addition, child-care advocates in Australia appeared more willing than their Canadian counterparts to accept a national strategy which committed the federal government to increase child-care funding and the number of child-care places without a commitment to universality. More importantly, the type of federalism in Australia allows the federal government to assume a greater responsibility for child-care with spending powers that permitted it to influence child-care policies and programs at the state level. In contrast, child-care in Canada is primarily a provincial responsibility and the federal government has increasingly relinquished what little spending power it had over social programs to the provinces.

Child-care policy at the federal level in Australia and Canada is mostly concerned with the provision of financial assistance for families with dependent children. Both direct and indirect funding arrangements and types of policy benefits provided in both countries were discussed in Chapter 7. While the Canadian federal government primarily provides support for child-care through the taxation system, the Australian federal government also provides funds direct to child-care providers to subsidise capital expenditure, operational costs, and parental fees. In Canada, only some provinces provide capital and operational subsidies and the level of subsidisation of parental fees varies from province to province.

In addition to direct child-care funding, indirect funding is provided for child-care in the form of a family tax payment in Australia and a child tax benefit in Canada. These targeted benefits are the current manifestations of benefits which replaced the

universal family allowance in Australia, in 1987, and in Canada, in 1993. The change in Canada placed the benefit more firmly within federal jurisdiction, 'at a time when there are jurisdictional disputes over some Canadian social programs' (Baker, 1995:155). The Australian federal government does not have similar concerns about overlapping jurisdiction.

Although the taxation system is a relatively efficient and effective means of delivering benefits, it is regressive and is unlikely to improve the level of benefits in either Australia or Canada in the future. Moreover, proposed changes to benefits provided through the taxation system are less immediately obvious to the general public. As Baker (1995) has noted,

[g]enerally, countries that rely on tax concessions to assist families provide a *lower* [sic] level of benefits than countries using universal allowances, especially when the benefits are funded through social security programs. (1995:155)

Nonetheless, there is a discernible shift taking place in Australia and in Canada toward the provision of direct and indirect financial assistance for child-care through the taxation system. The taxation system in Australia has also been used by the federal government to encourage employers and private operators to enter the market and increase the number of formal spaces.

During the late 1980s and early 1990s, the Canadian federal government, regardless of ruling party, was preoccupied with economic rationalism, deficit reduction and problems of Canadian unity posed by the question of Quebec sovereignty. Consequently, the issue of child-care tended to disappear from political discussions and funding for child-care all but dried up. Meanwhile, the Australian federal Labor government implemented consecutive national child-care strategies and increased its child-care expenditure year after year. The rapid growth in child-care expenditure, however, came to an end when a Coalition government was elected in 1996. In a similar fashion to its Canadian conservative counterparts, the Coalition delivered drastic cuts to child-care in both of its budgets to date, the affects of which are now being reflected in the withdrawal of children from formal child-care places across the country.

Child-Care Policy Outcomes in Canada and Australia: Similarities and Differences

The provinces/states and territories determine child-care outcomes, for the most part, in Canada and, to a lesser extent, in Australia. This is a result of provincial/state and

territorial jurisdiction over the distribution of federal funds, licensing and regulation. Consequently, the provinces/states and territories control the availability, affordability and quality of child-care in each country. In Australia, state/territory control is mediated by federal funding powers which tie funding for long care centres to registration and accreditation with the National Quality Assurance and Accreditation Council, despite the opposition by some private operators and conservative politicians who argue that regulation can deter providers from entering the market, will lead to an increase in prices and to a reduction in parent's options (Baker, 1995). Others argue that without the extension of fee relief to children receiving care in private centres, the majority of private operators who opened their business after the extension was introduced would not have bothered to do so in the first place. Still, the more expensive form of child-care, care for infants and toddlers, is provided by community-based and non-profit providers.

The social justice theme of the 1980s and 1990s which stressed income-testing and child-care service expansion was followed in full in Australia but only in part in Canada. While there has been minimal change in the number of child-care services in Canada throughout the last decade, the number and type of child-care services in Australia expanded rapidly. The number of children using these spaces and Australian federal child-care expenditure also grew enormously.

Between June 1989 and June 1996, the number of child care places funded through the CSP [Children's Services Program] increased from 114,391 to 306,575 places, while the number of children in CSP-funded child care services increased from 153,100 to 570,300. Between 1980-90 and 1995-96, Commonwealth expenditure on children's services through the CSP increased from \$215.8 million to \$854.4 million in real terms (1989-90 constant prices). (AIHW, 1997:144-145)

Growth in private-for-profit and employer-sponsored long day care centres accounted for the largest growth in Children's Service's Program (CSP)-funded child-care places. This growth was directly related to the extension of Childcare Assistance eligibility in 1991. This eligibility change represented the beginning of a shift in federal child-care funding from direct expenditure on service provision to indirect expenditure aimed at making child-care more affordable for parents. Since the Howard government came to power and slashed federal child-care funding, the use of formal child-care services in Australia has declined. This decline, like that in Canada throughout the early 1990s, has raised concern about the affordability, accessibility, and quality of child-care arrangements being used across the country.

The increase in formal child-care places in Australia resulted in a shift from the use of informal child-care arrangements to formal child-care services. The reverse situation occurred in Canada as child-care subsidies became more tightly targeted in association with federal and provincial budget cutbacks. The use of parental care arrangements only, remained virtually unchanged in both countries. Moreover, the gender division of child-care labour in all child-care settings remained unchanged. While the expansion of affordable child-care places in Australia has promoted the commodification of women's labour and enhanced gender equality in the labour market, the gendered segregation of child-care labour within the formal and informal economy, and the gendered division of child-care labour within the household, have remained unchanged. This is reflected in the time use data, presented in Chapters 4 and 6, on the differentiation of time spent by men and women participating in child-care activities.

Access to affordable child-care was extended to many Australian families as a consequence of policy changes during the late 1980s and early 1990s, but the supply of places has not kept up with demand. Moreover, a number of inequities remain. As the data in Chapter 6 on variations in child-care arrangements demonstrates, the use of formal child-care services in Australia is affected by family type, family income, the age of the child, area of usual residence, and cultural background. Single parent families, rural families, non-English speaking families, indigenous and Aboriginal families, and children under preschool age were found to be disproportionately under-represented among users of formal child-care services, while higher income families who reside in major cities and whose main language spoken at home is English were over-represented. Because the greatest use of formal child-care services is by dual income families, child-care in Australia has been viewed as a form of occupational welfare, which primarily benefits higher incomes families, particularly those of the upper middle class. Similar inequalities are reported to exist in Canada, although provincial differences in the availability, affordability and subsequent use of formal or regulated child-care in Canada are more obvious.

As indicated in Chapter 8, the quality of child-care is dependent on a number of factors. These factors include staff-child interactions, staff-child ratios, group size, staff qualifications, and staff working conditions. Licensing and regulation of child-care centres depend on child-care providers meeting certain requirements and standards that relate to some of these factors. In Canada, requirements and standards vary from

province to province: In Australia, national standards have been devised and promoted for long day care centres and family day care providers. In both countries, lower levels of government are responsible for the monitoring, regulation and enforcement of the set standards and requirements. Consequently, the quality of care varies within each country. However, formal child-care in Australia is now mostly regulated and of high quality, while the quality of centre-based and family day care in Canada remains variable and only partially regulated.

Summary

Child-care in Australia and Canada shares a similar history, as well as common issues and challenges. The main difference between these two welfare states in the 1990s is that Australian child-care policy has a national basis, whereas child-care policy in Canada is primarily the responsibility of the provinces.

The Canadian approach to child-care is characteristic of what Bronfenbrenner (1992) refers to as the 'Anglo-Saxon mode'. It is like that in the United States and the United Kingdom, driven by a commitment to individualism and a view of child-care as a private family responsibility which, if left to the vagaries of the 'market', will increase individual family choice (Friendly, 1999; Lamb, et al 1992; Melhuish and Moss, 1991; England, 1996). While Australia is leaning toward the maximum public responsibility model of child-care, child-care in Canada is firmly located within the maximum private responsibility model. Nonetheless, both countries tend to emphasise 'parental choice' during periods of fiscal restraint as a way of justifying budget cuts and decreased government involvement in child-care provision. Further, child-care in Canada and in Australia is identified as an employment related issue rather than as a family issue. Supply of formal care is directly linked to the paid employment of mothers.

The biggest challenge for Australian child-care policy is to broaden its objectives to include a focus upon the needs of all children, and to integrate private and social responsibilities. This will require a strengthening of the partnerships between the various institutions which are involved in the care of children (i.e., families, governments, communities, religious organisations, business, industry and trade unions) (Cass, 1994).

In contrast, the challenge for Canada remains the development of a national policy which can encompass provincial and territorial differences and promote similar

standards of high quality care across the country. A shift in jurisdiction is needed in Canada to create a comprehensive national child-care system that can meet the stated objectives of universality, equity, accessibility, affordability, availability, flexibility, appropriateness, comprehensiveness, and high quality child-care.

In both nations, child-care policies need to be firmly linked to other policies such as support and assistance for parental, and informal care as well as for formal child-care arrangements. Ideally child-care policy would be explicit and legislated as part of a broader family policy which is embedded in wider social and economic policy. This may be much harder to achieve in Canada than it would be in Australia. Nonetheless, given favourable social, political and economic conditions and the will of a federal government such an ideal could become a reality.

Further research needs to investigate new ways of measuring the success of child-care policy developments. Hayden (1992) has suggested, that one possible measure would be the extent to which our attitudes about the role of women in society, has been contested and altered. While we know from time budget studies that there is a gendered differentiation in the time spent on different child-care tasks, qualitative research is also required to provide a greater understanding of the different ways in which child-care is experienced by mothers and fathers.

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Appendix A

Population ('000) of Provinces/States, and Territories for Canada and Australia,
1995/96.

CANADA		AUSTRALIA	
	1995		1996
Ontario	11005	New South Wales	6204
Quebec	7300	Victoria	4561
British Columbia	3719	Queensland	3339
Alberta	2727	South Australia	1474
Manitoba	1133	Western Australia	1766
Saskatchewan	1017	Tasmania	475
Nova Scotia	938	Northern Territory	182
New Brunswick	761	A.C.T.	308
Newfoundland	580		
Prince Edward Island	136		
North West Territories	65		
Yukon	30		
<i>Total Pop.</i>	<i>29410</i>	<i>Total Pop.</i>	<i>18311</i>

Source: ABS (1998); Statistics Canada (1995).

Appendix B

Women's Policy Machinery in Canada

AGENCY	DESCRIPTION OF ESTABLISHMENT AND CONTRIBUTIONS TO CHILD-CARE
The Royal Commission on the Status of Women (RCSW) and the Feminist Movement	Tabled in December 1970. Shared childcare responsibility was one of six principles which also included human rights; equal opportunity; freedom to work or not; pregnancy and childbirth considerations; affirmative action. The 1972 Strategy for Change Conference in Toronto established the National Action Committee on the Status of Women (NAC) as an umbrella group for 'traditional' women's organisations to maintain communication with women across Canada and to get RCSW recommendations implemented. Successful re cost effective economic and social policy recommendations but those for a national childcare system, equal pay for work of equal value, pensions for homemakers, a guaranteed annual income for single parents, and abortion on demand in first 12 weeks still not implemented.
Status of Women Canada (SWC)	To have women's concerns integrated into the overall government planning and decision-making process with a mandate to eliminate the obstacles that limit choices and opportunities for women. Coordinates and monitors policy.
Integrating and Monitoring Government's Policies	1975 review led to the adoption in 1976 of a new federal policy requesting all sectoral departments to examine the impact on women of their proposals with analysis considerations written in Cabinet documents. Femocrats have only nominal power to recommend policies, and real power only to promote research and offer advice. The Neilsen Task Force found that no federal department systematically reviews its policies a suggested and concluded that the main success of the SWC was in pulling the Provinces together for national awareness of issues relating to women and for consensus building. Joint working groups have recently addressed childcare, the role of women in non-traditional fields, family violence, and women's reproductive health.
Minister Responsible for the Status of Women	To ensure concerns of women are integrated into the overall government planning and decision making process by raising concerns in full Cabinet and committee meetings and before the Prime Minister. All Ministers have simultaneously held other portfolios which has led to conflict.
The Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women (CACSW)1973	Mandate to act as a conduit for information from women across Canada to the federal government on all issues of concern to women, carry out and publish research, bring to public attention issues of interest and concern to women, present briefs to parliamentary committees. In theory an independent organisation funded by government (\$3.2 million in 1987-88). 27 PT and 3 FT members appointed by Cabinet through Orders-in-Council thus marginal with respect to the government and to the women's movement.
The Women's Programme of the Department of Secretary of State	Mandate to administer grants to women's equal rights organisations and social service groups at national, regional, and local level. 1980-90 budget allocated \$13.2 million to fund 750 women's groups thus giving financial stability and legitimacy to women's issues. This means though that the government controls the agenda by setting a priority list of funding even though the Program's development, organisation and management has been clearly feminist in perspective. The 1987 report on 'Fairness in Funding' which looked into the conflict with REAL Women suggested subsequent funding cuts and a shift to irregular project funding from the stable operational funding increased state control over grass-roots feminist organisations. Such an arrangement is considered effective only under sympathetic governments.
First Minister's Conferences (FMCs)	Twice yearly meeting of Prime Minister (chair) and provincial leaders and observed by Territory leaders. In November 1985 and 1986 the FMC endorsed the documents 'A Framework for Economic Equality for Canadian Women' and 'Towards a Labour Force Strategy: A Framework for Training Women' respectively. A progress report was considered in 1987 and in 1989 the topic was 'Integration of Work and Family Responsibilities: Report on Strategies' which dealt with development, consolidation and monitoring of policies and programmes in areas such as childcare, parental and family leave, flexible work arrangements, part time work and a gender neutral division of labour.
Overall Comment	State feminist commitments, broadly defined as women's equality and positive action are well entrenched in Canada with policy machinery at both federal and provincial levels enjoying strong bi-partisan support. The network linking women's groups across the country evolved largely from a state-directed policy network in the 1960s, to a clientele relationship in the 1970s and pressure pluralist network in the 1980s. The group is now more diverse and fragmented and weakened by economic rationalism and privatisation.

Source: Burt, S. (1988); Heitlinger (1993: 80-93); Vickers, Rankin & Appelle (1993).

Appendix C

Women's Policy Machinery in Australia

AGENCY	DESCRIPTION OF ESTABLISHMENT AND CONTRIBUTIONS TO CHILD-CARE
Women's Electoral lobby (WEL) and Femocrats	Formed in Melbourne in February 1972. WEL was modeled on the US National Organisation of Women (NOW) being liberal - reform oriented with an aim to place six demands of the Australia Women's Liberation Movement (WLM) - free, safe abortion on demand; free contraception; 24 hour childcare; equal employment opportunity; equal pay; and equal access to education - on the political agenda. Proved highly effective in translating women's demands into a public policy agenda, lobbying MPs, and in providing a political training ground for future politicians and femocrats.
Women's Advisor to the Prime Minister (WAPM)	WAPM was first suggested by Gail Radford (Wilenski) convenor of WEL, ACT to Peter Wilenski, then Prime Minister Whitlam's principal private secretary. Elizabeth Reid (feminist philosopher ANU) was selected in April 1973 for the political position. WEL needed to follow up by lobbying for adequate resources. Women's Affairs Section (WAS) was established with Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC) in 1974 in Welfare Division (same as OC SWC) replacing the WAPM position. WAS was headed by Sara Dowse.
Introducing Feminist Machinery of Government Minister Assisting the Prime Minister on Women's Affairs (MAPMWA)	Dowse presented a proposal in 1975 at the IWY Women and Politics Conference for a centre-periphery model or wheel conceived as a network with the Women's Affairs Branch as the hub and the units in sectoral departments as the spokes. This was endorsed in by the Whitlam and Fraser governments. By 1977 10 units existed. In June 1976 the MAPMWA was appointed (shadow portfolio established in 1979). It was later moved to the lower ranking Department of Home Affairs & Environment where it was marginalised. Kathleen Taperell replaced Dowse who resigned in protest to the shift and kept the Office alive while maintaining a low profile. The Office was returned to the DPMC in 1983 when the Hawke labor government took office in accordance with the ALP policy document drafted by Dowse on <i>The ALP and Women: Towards Equality</i> . Senator Susan Ryan became MAPM on SW in 1983 staying till 1988. She played a vital role as the senior Cabinet Minister of Education.
Women's Budget Statements	Set up by Hawke's Task Force on SW as Women's Budget Program to analyse outcomes of past and future expenditures and government progress in implementing the 'NAW' Largely initiated by Anne Summers (OSW Head 1983-86). Presented a challenge for economic departments who initially resisted producing disaggregated analysis of the impact of their policies claiming they are gender neutral. Considered exemplary within UN, Commonwealth, OECD bodies yet fear of self-perpetuating bureaucratic industry self justifying public relations exercise without producing desired effect.
The Office of the Status of Women (OSW)	Titled as such in 1982, upgraded to a Division in 1983, OSW has been engaged in a broad range of activities functioning mainly to provide relevant policy advice to the PM and MAPM assisted by regular networking with women's desk officers (WDOs) and women's bureau (WB) in sectoral departments (inaugurated in 1986). WB in DEET was inaugurated in 1963 however the main economic departments are rather hostile to OSW with notable absence of women from key forums such as the Expenditure Review Committee of Cabinet. The tripartite formula also works against women's interests. The OSW mandate includes coordination of the Women's Budget Statement, communication and consultation with community groups, research sponsorship, women's register of possible board and advisory body members, international SW co-operation; convening and chairing special advisory or consultative bodies, newsletter publication OSWOMEN, provide secretariats for the National Women's Consultative Council (NWCC) and Task Force on SW, administers grants scheme \$300 000 1988-89 budget (women's groups are mostly funded by the states). Operating fund of \$3 571 400 of which all but \$2039 is for salaries (staff of 37) and administration costs.

Continued

Appendix B continued

AGENCY	DESCRIPTION OF ESTABLISHMENT AND CONTRIBUTIONS TO CHILD-CARE
The National Agenda for Women	Based on the Nairobi FLS translated into a plan of action till 2000. Outline in Nov 1985 as 'a say, a choice, a fair go', followed by extensive consultation, report <i>Setting the Agenda</i> published in 1987 and launched in Feb 1988 as umbrella document. Budget only \$1.6 million for 3 year domestic violence campaign and \$5.1 million for 3 year health initiatives. Criticised for lack of commitment to childcare and pay equity. Included 15 statistical gender equity indicators for measuring women's economic and social progress including measures of formal childcare and childcare available to women workers. Effective only if used by women in the community as well as women in government.
The National Women's Advisory (Consultative) Council 1978	Appointments made to ensure informal representation of major women's organisations and sectoral interests. B. Beaurepaire (Liberal convenor 1978-82) helped raise public profile of feminist demands in a positive way. Commissioned study on financial arrangements within families (M. Edwards, 1981), deflected anti-feminist criticism of women's policy machinery. Later used to promote Hawke government initiatives.
Overall Comment	Australian feminist success in effecting change in public policies and in fostering bureaucratic innovation has resulted from (1) the view of a 'neutral' and 'benevolent' state as in Canada; (2) the political tradition of interest groups-government relations; (3) the emergence of WEL; (4) the election of the Whitlam Labor government ; (5) bi-partisan support; (6) the alliance between newer feminist organisations and 'traditional' women's groups; (7) lack of effective anti-feminist opposition; (8) existence of centralised wag-fixing system and powerful, legitimate trade union movement supportive of feminist initiatives and of women's policy machinery.

Sources: Dowse (1988); Sawer (1990); Heitlinger (1993: 80-93); Sawer & Simms (1993).

Appendix D

A Comparison of the Social, Political, Economic, and Cultural Characteristics of Australia and Canada

CHARACTERISTIC	CANADA	AUSTRALIA
Parliamentary system	Westminster model + federal constitution	Westminster model + federal constitution
State	modern 'Western' stable, prosperous, highly industrialised	modern 'Western' stable, prosperous, highly industrialised
Intellectual Traditions	liberal democratic	liberal democratic
Political Traditions	decentralised 'executive' federalism with Provinces like nation-states Tory conservative gov. till 1993, now Liberal	decentralised federalism Labor gov. from 1983 to present with strong links to ACTU
Language	English except Quebec	English
Economy	Americanised free trade 1988 primary & secondary industries	Asia /Pacific primary industry dominated
Union Movement	adversarial labour relations lack strong centralised state association	wage earner welfare state with Wage Accord centralised industrial award system, Tripartism and a Social Contract
Bill of Rights	Charter of Rights & Freedoms 1982	no Bill of Rights but a fear of more centralised power
Women's Policy Machinery	Parliamentary women's advisers Status of Women Canada / Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women / NAC women's movement strong until 1980's now diverse & fragmented	Parliamentary & femocrats Women's Electoral Lobby / Prime Minister's Adviser / Office for the Status of Women in the Department of the Prime Minister & Cabinet / National Women's Advisory Council
Public Advocacy Groups	initially favourable less so during 1980's	favourable
Maternity Leave	Canada Labour Code provides 17 weeks of maternity leave	52 weeks unpaid 1979
Maternity Allowances	Paid through UI to 60% insurable income	12 weeks paid public sector only Revised 1995
Family Assistance	National Family Allowance Program (1944) tax deduction, credit	1912 lump sum payment upon birth of child child endowment - family allowance
Parental Leave	Canada Labour Code provides 24 weeks of child care leave that may be taken by either the mother or father	1990 unpaid for mother or father Revised 1995
Child-Care Arrangements	informal dominance commercial care orientated little federal funding provincial concern Day Nurseries Act - Ontario (1946) Canada Assistance Plan (1966)	Childcare Act 1972 National Strategy on Childcare 1988 ACTU concern, employer-provider growth union & femocrat initiated and driven

Note: Shaded area highlights characteristics related to child-care and related policies and child-care arrangements.

Source: Heitlinger (1993); O'Connor, (1993).

Appendix E

Child Care Bill 1972 (Commonwealth Government of Australia)

Bill presented by Mr Lynch, and read a first time.

Second Reading

Excerpts

This Bill be now read a second time.

This Bill gives effect to the announcement by the Treasurer (Mr Snedden) in his Budget Speech on 15th August last of the Government's intention to bring down legislation concerning child care centres./ This Government initiative is a tangible expression of its very real and proper concern for the welfare of children. It is designed as a humanitarian measure with particular concern being directed to those in need.

The purpose of the legislation is to ensure the development of child day care facilities of good quality throughout the Commonwealth. Included in the concept 'good quality' are both the physical arrangements and the professional staffing, in the provision of which the overriding consideration will be the emotional, intellectual and physical development of children in child care centres.

This legislation expresses the Government's recognition of the rapidly increasing proportion of married women in the labour force and of the consequences of this phenomenon for the care of their children. Since 1961 the proportion of married women in the labour force has increased from 17 per cent to over 35 per cent. It is evident that, for a wide variety of reasons, an increasing number of married women are choosing to remain in or return to paid employment. They include mothers with young families. It is known that at the present time over 25 per cent of mothers with children under the age of 6 are in the labour force. Some of these mothers are engaged in paid employment in their own homes and care for their children at the same time. But there are over 150,000 pre-school aged children whose mothers, or single fathers, work outside their homes.

Consistent with these developments the Government some time ago established a special section within my Department - the Women's Bureau - to examine problems relating to the employment of women. Its work has included an investigation relating to needs in child care, particularly the needs of working mothers. Its studies covered developments in the field of child day care in most other industrialised countries. Further research programmes instigated in my Department and elsewhere subsequently indicated the parameters of the problem of child day care. Most importantly, they revealed that child care facilities had not kept pace with the rapid growth in the female labour force during the 1960s, and that, as a consequence, existing child care facilities were inadequate, qualitatively and quantitatively, for the growing numbers of children needing them. Not only were there too few centres but in many cases the provision was only for child minding and not for quality of child care appropriate to the educational, emotional and developmental needs of the young children involved ...

In summary, the Government decided that action was urgently needed; action to ensure sufficient good quality child care facilities in the community for the proper care and development of pre-school aged children whose parents or guardians are unable, for a variety of reasons, to make other suitable arrangements. These facilities should be available at a cost that is not prohibitive to parents, especially to parents of children in special needs. The latter include one-parent families, newly-arrived migrant, low-income groups generally and families where one of the parents is sick or incapacitated.

It is important to acknowledge that this initiative comprehends assistance at 3 levels - that of the child, of the family, and of the community. For that reason there will be no static approach to the concept of child care. The scheme is forward-looking and includes provision to stimulate research into all factors relating to the needs of the community in relation to the care of children, and for experiments in various child day care methods. It is the Government's intention to ensure an ongoing evaluation of both the short-term and long-term effects of the measures which this Bill will make possible. Before describing the scheme I want to emphasise 2 points of substance. First, it is the view of authorities concerned with child care - for example the Child Psychiatry Section of the Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists - that alternate care, provided for young children while their mothers are working, which is inadequate and unsatisfactory, can contribute to emotional disturbance in the child's later years. Of particular concern is the situation where young children are left in the care of untrained and unsupervised child minders who do not have the facilities conducive to the social and emotional development of young children. Unfortunately, many young children are being taken care of in just such circumstances.

The Government's initiative is to remedy this situation. Second, the Government's initiative springs from its concern for the welfare of children of working mothers. The increase of working mothers in the labour force is a phenomenon of modern industrial society. I do not make a value judgment upon it. It is also a fact at present 25 per cent of mothers with children under 6 years of age are in the labour force. That a substantial number of such mothers cannot make satisfactory arrangements for the care of their pre-school aged children is yet another fact. The purpose of the scheme is to meet this existing problem - to help the children of working and other parents insofar as they are deprived of proper child care either

because good quality facilities are not available or because the cost is presently too high. The scheme is not intended either to encourage or discourage mothers from entering paid employment.

The Scheme

In Summary, the Bill provides for assistance to non-profit organisations, including local governing bodies, to establish and operate centres which provide day care for children of working and sick parents and which give priority of admission to children in special need. For this purpose children in special needs are defined in clause 20 of the Bill. The proposed scheme has 4 main elements, as follows: (i) capital grants; (ii) recurrent grants in respect of qualified staff; (iii) recurrent grants with respect to children in special need; and (iv) grants for research and evaluation of matters relating to childcare ...

Conclusion

In conclusion I recall some of the principal factors to which the Government has had regard in developing the scheme provided for in this Bill. Children of pre-school age should not be deprived of proper care and the opportunity for the fullest possible development because their parents are not looking after them at home during the day. The community's attitudes to the working mother and working wife have changed dramatically in the last decade or so; there is certainly no question about this. It was confirmed again and again during its examination of the child care problems and to which I have already referred. The attitude of the working mother is that her presence in the community is a fact and that assistance with the care of her children is a pressing need. The Government, in bringing down this legislation, is meeting this need. It will be clear, however, from observations I have already made that the Government is not necessarily committed to any one method for achieving this purpose. Its intention is to ensure that the development of its assistance for child day care is kept under close review.

Continuing evaluation of the centres is essential. It is not the Government's intention to help additional child care centres into existence and then forget about them. The evaluation will reveal what is happening in the centre and what their impact is on the community, on the families involved and on the children themselves.

Child care centres will be community oriented. This is implicit in the references I have made to their impact on the community. It is basic, therefore, that the physical conditions in the centres facilitate and encourage the participation and involvement of parents in the care and development of their children at the centres. (Extension of time granted). One responsibility of the Child Care Standards Committee will be to examine designs for centres to ensure that they incorporate physical features which parents placing their children in a centre can use as a community service. More precisely, parents will be encouraged to see the centre as a place to which they can come to discuss the development of their children with other parents, with the staff in the centre and with qualified professional people ...

The Government envisages that if a beginning can be made to turn this legislation into reality quickly, we can look forward to an increase of at least 20 per cent per annum over the next 3 years in the number of places for pre-school children that will be available in child care centres. This is worth achieving while research into related developments is being evaluated. It is very important for honourable members to appreciate that significant though the increase in physical accommodation is, of much greater importance is the provision for improving the quality of child care that will be available to the community in future years. I draw the attention of honourable members to the recurrent grants that encourage- indeed, demand- the employment of qualified staff in centres including staff capable of providing pre-school education. The Government is not unmindful of the shortage of colleges concerned with their training. Thus, simultaneously, the supply of trained pre-school teachers is being increased and opportunities are being created for their employment.

The Government welcomes the opportunity to develop this legislation at this time. Under it a scheme is being provided for child care centres of good quality. Parents who use them will have the satisfaction of knowing this. The quality of child care is important not only to parents who, for one reason or another, choose to work, but also to all parents because in today's mobile society, with families living apart from grandparents and other relatives, there are many who have nowhere to turn when they are ill or in need of assistance with their children during the day. Child care centres have to be seen in their proper perspective; they are supportive of the family unit and in extreme cases are the alternative to placing children in residential institutions. I commend the Bill to the House.

Appendix F

Federal Day Care Policy Issues in Australia and Canada 1984.

ISSUES	AUSTRALIA	CANADA
Role of Central Government	In the period 1973-1975, the Federal government saw its responsibility as initiation of provision of early childhood services. Since 1976 it has argued that this is the responsibility of the States; the role of the Federal government is now viewed as supplementary to the States.	At no point has the Federal government played a major role in initiating policies to meet the need for day care. Even Social Services Act proposed in 1977 left major policy issues to be decided at provincial level.
Main Motivation of Concern	Needs of the economy prompted initial interest in the late 1960s. The educational needs of children, particularly disadvantaged children, predominated in 1973. Family support and opportunity structures and opportunity structures for women were stressed in 1974-75. Assistance to low income and special need families only has been the main theme from 1976-82.	Day care viewed from 1966 as one means of reducing poverty and dependence on public assistance. Some recognition of needs of working parents in 1974 regulations, but focus still unequivocally on low income earners as targets of federal support. Income tax deductions for child care expenses imply commitments to notion of public support for costs of parenting, but such goals repudiated in non-passage of Social Services Bills of 1977 and 1978.
Comprehensive or Selective Provision?	In 1973-75 the Federal government aspired to comprehensive provision, but with priority to families with special needs. Since 1975 the emphasis has increasingly been towards selective provision for low incomes families.	payments under CAP have been for low incomes families only. The user charge provisions of the proposed 1977 Act would have retained the selective focus. Income tax deductions benefit all families using child care that have taxable incomes.
Method of Implementation	A variety of methods have been used including grants to local community groups and local government; involvement of local government in planning; funding of local children's services field officers to stimulate development of services; block grants to States. All funds impose conditions or standards that must be accepted by the funded bodies.	Cost-sharing of on-going costs with the provinces. Details of implementation left at the discretion of the provinces provided conditions in cost-sharing agreement are met.
What Range of Programs?	Initially child care centres only. During 1973 an emphasis on pre-school education. From 1974 to 1980 emphasis on a wide range of services, including pre-school education. Some indications that mainstream day care provision will increasingly be the focus.	Day care only, including part-day nursery schools. Kindergartens in the pre-school year not included.
Services or Tax Deductions?	Subsidy or services only.	A mixture of subsidy or services and tax deductions.
Non-Profit or Commercial Provision?	Federal funds only go to services provided under governmental auspices or non-profit (community, parental, voluntary agency) auspice. Experimentation in funding commercial centres taking place in 1982-83.	Federal funds may go to commercially provided services, as well as governmental and non-profit services.

Source: Jones (1984:9-11)

Appendix G

Foundation Dates of Major Voluntary Organisations and Training Colleges in Australia and Canada.

STATE / PROVINCE	ORGANISATION	DATE FORMED	TRAINING BEGUN
<i>AUSTRALIA</i>			
NSW	Kindergarten Union of NSW	1895	1896
	Sydney Day Nursery Association	1905	1932
Victoria	Free Kindergarten Union of Victoria	1908	1916
	Victorian Association of Crèches	1910	NA
South Australia	Kindergarten Union of South Australia	1905	1907
Queensland	Crèche and Kindergarten Association of Queensland	1907	1907
Tasmania	Hobart Free Kindergarten Association	1910	NA
Western Australia	Kindergarten Union of Western Australia	1911	1913
<i>CANADA</i>			
Ontario	Toronto Kindergarten	1883	
	East End Crèche	1892	
	Institute of Child Study UT	1926	1926
	Day Nurseries Act	1946	
Quebec	Montreal Day Nursery	1887	
	Montreal Crèche	1891	
British Columbia	Vancouver Day Nursery	1910	
	School of Child Care - University of Victoria		1970
Manitoba	Winnipeg Day Nursery	1909	

Sources : Australian references from Brennan (1994) ; Canadian references from Goelman (1992).

Appendix H

Number of Regulated Centre-Base Care and Family Day Care Places by Province/Territory, Canada, 1992 & 1995.

PROVINCE / TERRITORY	1992	1995
Newfoundland & Labrador	3,568	3,705
Prince Edward Island	3,531	3,320
Nova Scotia	10,826	10,645
New Brunswick	7,162	7,952
Quebec	54,558	70,782
Ontario	120,607	147,853
Manitoba	15,734	15,591
Saskatchewan	5,695	6,340
Alberta	51,656	51,088
British Columbia	35,739	46,434
Northwest Territory	963	1,286
Yukon Territory	885	871
<i>Canada</i>	<i>310,536</i>	<i>359,404</i>

Source: CRRU (1993, 1996)

Appendix I

Number of Formal (CSP Funded) Centre-Based Care and Family Day Care Places by State/Territory, Australia, 1992 & 1996.

STATE/TERRITORY	1992	1996
New South Wales	75,500	73,378
Victoria	49,282	51,448
Queensland	48,374	61,042
Western Australia	17,071	17,571
South Australia	16,983	13,252
Tasmania	6,994	3,728
Northern Territory	2,463	2,275
A.C.T	5,394	5,460
<i>Australia</i>	<i>222,861</i>	<i>228,154</i>

Source: DHHLGCS (1993); AIHW (1997)

Appendix J

Average Full-Time Fees Per Week by Service Type and State/Territory, Australia,
June 1993.

TYPE OF CARE	NSW	VIC	QLD	WA	SA	TAS	ACT	NT	AUSTRALIA
					\$				
Community-based LDC	122	132	109	128	145	140	132	123	126
Private-for-profit LDC	122	127	122	125	135	135	146	115	124
Employer / other non-profit	133	128	115	123	131	133	138	117	129
Family Day Care	122	112	113	112	117	124	109	113	116
Overall Average	125*	125*	115	122	132*	133	131*	117	124*

*Figures are rounded to the nearest dollar.
Source: HSH (1995b:137) cited in AIHW(1997) Table 4.17.

Appendix K

Average Monthly Fees Charged for Care of Infants and Preschoolers in Licensed and Unlicensed Facilities, by Province/Territory, Canada, 1984.

PROVINCE / TERRITORY	INFANTS			PRESCHOOLERS		
	Licensed Centre	Licensed Family Home	Unlicensed Family Home	Licensed Centre	Licensed Family Home	Unlicensed Family Home
Newfoundland & Labrador	-	-	244	288	-	248
Prince Edward Island	239	178	218	244	200	217
Nova Scotia	259	253	244	262	244	223
New Brunswick	288	-	273	208	-	257
Quebec	288	244	241	275	248	237
Ontario	418	294	254	318	290	254
Manitoba	293	251	253	255	246	257
Saskatchewan	338	314	278	305	305	257
Alberta	268	299	253	270	279	267
British Columbia	435	312	318	288	301	295
Canada*	337	294	258	287	287	255

Fees are the amount that would be charged by a facility for a space occupied on a full-day basis, five days each week, for 52 weeks of the year then divided by 12 for a monthly rate. Fees are rounded to the nearest \$1.

*Averages for licensed centres and licensed family homes are weighted reflecting the distribution of spaces across Canada. Averages for unlicensed family homes are weighted by the distribution of children in Canada under two years of age for infants and by the distribution of children in Canada aged two to five years inclusive for preschoolers.

Source: Status of Women Canada (1986)

Appendix L

Average Monthly Fees Charged for Care of School-Aged Children in Licensed and Unlicensed Facilities, by Province/Territory, Canada, 1984.

PROVINCE / TERRITORY	LICENSED CENTRE	LICENSED FAMILY HOME	UNLICENSED FAMILY HOME
Newfoundland & Labrador	116	-	160
Prince Edward Island	126	-	112
Nova Scotia	146	134	119
New Brunswick	126	-	131
Quebec	80	150	131
Ontario	153	152	125
Manitoba	124	138	121
Saskatchewan	138	158	121
Alberta	123	141	134
British Columbia	135	132	138
Canada*	127	144	129

Fees are the amount that would be charged by a facility for a space occupied for four hours, five days each week, for four weeks. Fees are rounded to the nearest \$1.

*Averages for Canada are calculated on Provincial averages.

Source: Status of Women Canada (1986).

Appendix M

Average Full-Time Monthly Fees for Centre-Based Care by Age Group and Province/Territory, Canada, 1992 & 1995.

PROVINCE / TERRITORY	INFANTS		PRESCHOOLER		SCHOOL AGE*	
	1992	1995	1992	1995	1992	1995
				\$		
Newfoundland & Labrador	na	na	370	na	na	na
Prince Edward Island	530	530	375	375	150	175
Nova Scotia	na	500	na	400	na	250
New Brunswick	382	405	335	373	160	194
Quebec	407	444	328	444	200	na
Ontario**	805	na	606	na	na	na
Manitoba	529	501	348	320	219	191
Saskatchewan	418	431	328	358	255	270
Alberta	382	430	348	385	na	375
British Columbia	608	na	366	na	172	na
Northwest Territories	500	560	500	530	na	145
Yukon	500	560	450	500	225	215
Canada***	473	485	375	409	197	227

*Fees for School Aged children are for before / after school care, not for care over the summer.

**Ontarian child-care centre fees range in various locations from \$6026 in Northern Ontario to \$13,303 in Ottawa for Infants and from \$5522 in Western Ontario to \$9036 in Ottawa for preschoolers.

***Averages for Canada were calculated on provincial averages, where available, with the exclusion of figures for Ontario.

Source: CRRU (1994, 1997).

Appendix N

Average Full-Time Monthly Fees for Family Day Care by Age Group and Province/Territory, Canada, 1992 & 1995.

PROVINCE / TERRITORY	INFANTS		PRESCHOOLER		SCHOOL AGE*	
	1992	1995	1992	1995	1992	1995
				\$		
Newfoundland & Labrador	na	na	na	na	na	na
Prince Edward Island	530	530	375	375	150	175
Nova Scotia	na	500	na	400	na	250
New Brunswick	340	374	300	352	160	154
Quebec	407	374	328	374	200	na
Ontario**			Range from \$280 to \$600			
Manitoba	380	352	302	274	207	191
Saskatchewan	337	370	314	340	264	279
Alberta	326	430	324	375	na	na
British Columbia	400	na	400	na	na	na
Northwest Territories	500	543	500	536	na	150
Yukon	565	565	491	475	227	215
Canada***	420	449	370	389	173	202

* Fees for School Aged children are for before / after school care, not for care over the summer.

**Based on a child 3yrs without special needs

***Averages for Canada were calculated on provincial averages, where available, with the exclusion of figures for Ontario.

Source: CRRU (1994, 1997).

Appendix O

The Use of Formal and Informal Child-Care by Family Income, Australia, 1996.

WEEKLY FAMILY INCOME	NUMBER OF ALL CHILDREN UNDER 12 YEARS	CHILDREN WHO USED ALL TYPES OF CARE (FORMAL AND/OR INFORMAL CARE)	CHILDREN WHO USED FORMAL CARE ONLY	CHILDREN WHO USED INFORMAL CARE ONLY	CHILDREN WHO USED FORMAL AND INFORMAL CARE				
	'000	'000	%	'000	%	'000	%	'000	%
< \$400	553.0	238.7	43.2	57.4	10.4	152.5	27.6	28.8	5.2
\$400 - \$499	302.1	123.5	40.9	35.0	11.6	67.5	22.3	21.0	6.9
\$500 - \$599	270.9	113.0	41.7	26.3	9.7	67.0	24.7	19.7	7.3
\$600 - \$799	568.3	263.1	46.3	68.7	12.1	156.1	27.5	38.3	6.7
\$800 - \$999	468.9	234.5	50.0	63.3	13.5	135.1	28.8	36.2	7.7
\$1000 - \$1499	460.8	272.2	59.1	65.1	14.1	154.1	33.4	53.1	11.5
\$1500 - \$1999	151.7	95.6	63.0	22.5	14.8	50.6	33.3	22.5	14.8
\$2000 & over	102.9	77.0	74.8	13.8	13.4	43.5	42.3	19.7	19.1
Not Stated	224.2	84.1	37.5	21.5	9.6	51.0	22.7	11.7	5.2
All Families	3102.8	1501.8	48.4	373.5	20.1	877.5	28.3	250.8	8.1

Source: ABS (1997)

Appendix P

Weekly Family Income and the Use of Formal and Informal Child-Care in Australia, 1990, 1993 & 1996.

WEEKLY FAMILY INCOME	CHILDREN WHO USED FORMAL AND/OR INFORMAL CHILD- CARE, NUMBER & PROPORTION OF ALL CHILDREN UNDER 12 YEARS		WEEKLY FAMILY INCOME	CHILDREN WHO USED FORMAL AND/OR INFORMAL CHILD-CARE, NUMBER & PROPORTION OF ALL CHILDREN UNDER 12 YEARS		WEEKLY FAMILY INCOME	CHILDREN WHO USED FORMAL AND/OR INFORMAL CHILD-CARE, NUMBER & PROPORTION OF ALL CHILDREN UNDER 12 YEARS	
1990			1993			1996		
\$	'000	%	\$	'000	%	\$	'000	%
< 160	21.9	40.9	< 160	25.9	37.6	< 400	238.7	43.2
160 - 319	143.4	54.3	160 - 319	199.6	44.2	400 - 499	123.5	40.9
320 - 479	165.5	53.3	320 - 479	227.4	40.7	500 - 599	113.0	41.7
480 - 639	186.1	57.1	480 - 639	241.1	44.8	600 - 799	263.1	46.3
640 - 799	164.9	63.3	640 - 799	201.8	49.8	800 - 999	234.5	50.0
800 & over	353.2	71.1	800 - 1039	238.8	57.0	1000 - 1499	272.2	59.1
			1040 - 1279	142.0	58.7	1500 - 1999	95.6	63.0
			1280 & over	178.9	67.9	2000 & over	77.0	74.8
Not Stated	62.8	53.1	Not Stated	49.6	35.7	Not Stated	84.1	37.5
All Families	1097.6	60.0	All Families	1504.9	48.8	All Families	1501.8	48.4

Sources: ABS (1992, 1994, 1997) Child Care Australia, November 1990, June 1993, March 1996.

Appendix Q

Child-Care Arrangements by the Age of the Child, Australia, 1996.

TYPE OF CARE	AGE OF CHILD (YEARS)								Total
	Under 1	1	2	3	4	5	6-8	9-11	
	<i>Proportion of Children (%)</i>								
Formal Care	7.6	22.0	35.5	56.3	62.1	12.2	9.2	66.2	20.1
Informal Care	33.6	41.6	42.9	42.4	40.0	33.7	34.1	33.3	36.4
Non-parental Care	38.0	55.1	62.5	75.3	76.8	41.3	40.1	37.3	48.4
Total Parental Care	62.0	44.9	37.5	24.7	23.2	58.7	59.9	62.7	51.6
Total Children	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
<i>Total Number of Children ('000)</i>	261.4	258	257.1	258.1	257.9	263.2	7772.8	774.4	3102.8

Source: ABS (1997)

Appendix R

**Federal Funding (CSP)* for Major Child-Care Service Types by Type of
Expenditure and Service Type, by State/Territory, Australia, 1991-92.**

FUNDING TYPE	NSW	VIC	QLD	WA	SA	TAS	ACT	NT	TOTAL
(\$'000)									
Total Federal Expenditure	117,329	93,578	86,206	32,722	34,214	10,571	9,015	6,158	389,792
Mean per Capita	1,212	1,303	1,329	1,471	1,355	1,170	1,188	1,505	1,292
(Per cent)									
Childcare Assistance	72.7	72.1	80.1	77.2	73.3	70.3	63.4	68.3	74.3
Operational and Capital	27.3	27.9	19.9	22.8	26.7	29.7	36.6	31.7	25.7
Total Federal Expenditure	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Type of Service	(\$'000)								
Long Day Care	75,276	54,180	56,078	21,274	17,709	5,007	3,637	3,448	193,698
Family Day Care	32,663	31,928	25,881	8,638	13,641	4,423	4,632	1,822	123,628
Outside School Hours Care	5,714	3,735	2,348	1,141	1,278	332	429	161	15,139
Other Formal Care**	3,675	3,736	1,898	1,670	1,586	809	317	727	14,418
Total	117,329	93,578	86,206	32,722	34,214	10,571	9,015	6,158	389,792
Expenditure per place / child per annum (\$)									
Long Day \$ per place	1,302	1,809	1,440	1,328	1,788	1,347	1,102	1,934	1,494
Care \$ per child	2,270	2,487	2,655	3,084	3,356	3,279	1,454	2,878	2,531
Family Day \$ per place	1,855	2,047	1,774	2,495	1,633	1,498	2,077	1,370	1,870
Care \$ per child	2,278	2,500	3,256	3,662	3,663	3,046	2,176	2,506	2,720
Outside \$ per place	347	294	262	352	227	208	265	303	298
School Hours \$ per child	311	312	323	340	313	247	339	290	314
Other Formal \$ per place	742	275	802	656	1,151	1,053	731	1,627	545
Care** \$ per child	2,405	2,458	2,816	2,185	2,703	4,065	2,617	3,017	2,559
Total \$ per place	1,212	1,303	1,329	1,471	1,355	1,170	1,188	1,505	1,292
\$ per child	1,741	1,947	2,329	2,445	2,504	2,337	1,498	2,263	2,022

* CSP expenditure includes operational, capital subsidies and Childcare Assistance.

** Other formal care includes occasional care, Multifunctional Children's Services and Multifunctional Aboriginal Children's Services.

Source: AIHW (1993)

Appendix S

Child-Care for Aboriginal and Special Needs Children by Province/Territory, Canada, 1995^a.

PROVINCE/ TERRITORY	CHILD-CARE FOR ABORIGINAL CHILDREN	CHILD-CARE FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS
Federal Government	First Nations / Inuit Child Care Initiative (FNICCI) targeted 225 additional spaces for the Atlantic provinces ^b and others as indicated	No role, no special funding initiatives.
Newfoundland & Labrador	1 regulated Inuit centre	1 regulated centre with 50 spaces; fee subsidies from Family & Rehabilitative Services
Prince Edward Island Nova Scotia	1 kindergarten centre on reserve Several on-reserve programs	Special Needs Project report 1997 Up to \$23.50 per day for registered centre integrating up to 50%; parents not income tested; 2 segregated programs
New Brunswick	30 licensed spaces, some Head Start programs on -reserve for in-need and at-risk children	Integrated Day Care Services Program for 2 to 5 year olds (75 centres with 388 spaces); funding up to \$3000 for integrated centres
Quebec	6 regulated on-reserve child-care centres and 1 regulated family day care agency on-reserve; 500 FNICCI spaces by 1998; Native Women's Association plays a key role	Written policy for inclusion of special needs children in regular programs; several grants facilitate the implementation of the policy
Ontario	48 child-care centres funded and licensed on-reserve with capacity of 1,803 spaces, 5 off-reserve centres plus 4 private home day care agencies with 36 homes serve Aboriginal children under cost-shared agreement	Day Nurseries Act authorises the operation of segregated day nurseries for 2-18 year olds and integrated programs for 2-10 year olds; resource teachers require specialised training
Manitoba	27 off-reserve centres; 9 culturally based services; one First Nations early childhood training program; 1042 FNICCI spaces by 1998	integrated services receive grants through Children with Disabilities program; 1 segregated school with 40 spaces
Saskatchewan	3 off-reserve licensed services; 5 family day care homes operated by Aboriginal organisations; 871 FNICCI spaces by 1998	integration of up to 15% (25% with approval) in centres with appropriate equipment and furnishings, specially trained staff
Alberta	18 on-reserve funded and 9 licenses centres with a total of 721 spaces; 127 FNICCI spaces by 1998	Integrated Day Care Program; funding varies with need and type of service
British Columbia	14 licensed on-reserve centres receiving 58 provincial grants; 1 training program in partnership with Native Indian bands; 703 FNICCI spaces by 1998	segregated and integrated programs moving toward inclusion; funding through federal-provincial strategic initiatives; staff require special training
Northwest Territories	31 funded and licensed centres/homes 16 communities and 24 in Yellowknife; 155 First Nations and 414 Inuit FNICCI spaces by 1998	care providers funded to provide extra support in integrated programs; some parents eligible for needs-tested fee relief upon medical referral
Yukon Territory	5 licensed centres with 100 spaces receive grants; 41 FNICCI spaces by 1998	1995 policy for integration of designated children who must have Individual Program Plan

^a Canadian provinces and territories do not have a written policy, license or fund child-care services for Aboriginal or Special Needs children, unless otherwise stated.

^b The Atlantic provinces include Newfoundland, Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick.

Source: CRRU (1997)

Appendix T

Government Support for Child-Care in Australia and Canada, 1994.

TYPE	AUSTRALIA		CANADA	
	Eligibility	Rate / Unit / Period / Threshold	Eligibility	Rate / Unit / Period / Threshold
Child Endowment (AUS)	Parent/guardian having care and control of child under 16.	\$10.65 p.w. family unit financial year \$60,000 p.a.	Parents / guardians of child under 16 years with family income <\$75,000 pa *	\$200+ (2 kids)(1993) family unit monthly means tested \$3635 (3 kids, fi \$20,000pa) to \$0 (2 kids + fi \$75,000p.a)
Child Benefit (CAN)				
Additional FP (AUS)	Parent / guardian receiving Basic Family Payment	\$32.10 (<13yr) \$45.30 (13yr+) family / \$21,350 p.a.	na	na
Child Care Rebate (AUS)	Parent of child under 13 years in formal or informal child care while parent works, trains or studies	\$28.20 p.w. per child (\$1466 p.a.) family unit	na	na
Child Care Subsidy (CAN)	Carer of child in approved full-time long day care centres and family day care schemes	\$94 p.w. family unit estimated annually \$475p.w.	Paid to parents paying for childcare after being 'needs tested' by municipality.	\$ family estimated monthly \$11000 (1parent) full subsidy to
Long Day Care (AUS)				
Outside School Hours Care (AUS)	Carer of child in before and after school care	\$0.68 per hour FT \$0.36 per hour PT family / financial year AFP eligibility FT/PT	na	\$43000 (2 parents) partial subsidy
Maternity Allowance	Home Child Care Allowance	\$132.65 p.w. mixed / fortnightly / \$231 p.w. (spouse) \$30 p.w. (allowee)	Paid to mother through Unemployment Insurance	60% wage mother weekly \$276 p.w. (allowee)
Child Tax Exemption (CAN)	Primary carer of children under 16 years. As family income, P.A to zero then spouse P.A to zero.	\$132.65 p.w. mixed estimated annually \$231 p.w. (partner) \$30 p.w. (allowee)	Parent/guardian of child under 18.	\$710 p.a. per child family estimated annually
Parenting Allowance (AUS)				
Home Child Care Allowance	Parent with at least one dependent child replaced Dependent Spouse Rebate	\$30 p.w. personal carer estimated annually \$30 p.w.	na	na
Sole Parent Rebate	Sole parent caring for at least one dependent child	\$159.05 p.w. personal / p.a. \$57 p.w.	Stay-at-home mothers who do not claim a childcare deduction*	\$213 credit mothers p.a.
Dependent Care Allowance	na	na	Parent/ guardian of child under 11 years training at approved college or school	\$75 p.w. per child trainee registered with Employment and Immigration

fi refers to family income, * refers to 1992 (except where 1993 specified)

Sources : Bradbury (1994) Dependency -related payments in the Australian Social Security and Tax Systems, 1995 ; Task Force on Child Care (1986:165-200). Chapter 8. Who pays for child care?; Heitlinger (1993: 266).